The Bookman.

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

No. 181. Vol. XXXI. Subscription rate 6s. per annum post free.

OCTOBER, 1906.

Price One Shilling. Published Monthly.

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READY IMMEDIATELY.

'The Bookman' Illustrated History of English Literature,

1s. net. **PART XII.** *1s. net.*

NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.

No unused communications will be returned whether stamps are enclosed for that purpose or not, and to this rule we can make no exception

News Notes.

We desire to call the attention of our readers and contributors to The Bookman's change of address. This in future will be:—The Bookman Office, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.

The first volume of "The Bookman Illustrated History of English Literature" will be published this month. For convenience of reference this will be furnished with a separate index. The second volume, which will follow immediately, will contain an index to the complete work.

The fifth and last volume of Mr. Herbert Paul's "History of Modern England" will be published immediately. Mr. Paul, it is interesting to learn, concludes his survey in cheerful and optimistic mood. "England has made many mistakes. Ireland is a standing reproach to the wisdom and capacity of her statesmen. The exception of Ireland proves the existence of the rule. For no political fabric known to history has surpassed or rivalled the British Empire, which is a synonym for England, in promoting the peace, the happiness, and the progress of mankind."

Messrs. Macmillan will publish shortly the first volume of an important work on English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Elizabeth, by Professor Schofield, of Harvard. This volume will come down to the time of Chaucer. The purpose of this work is to fill the gap in the well-known series of literary histories by Mr. Stopford Brooke, Professor Saintsbury, and Mr. Edmund Gosse.

The death of Alexandre Beljame removes one who for over twenty years has been the supreme authority on English Letters in the world of Latin speech. All Frenchmen who proposed to themselves a career as teachers of and writers on English Literature looked up to him as their instructor and inspirer in chief, and his supremacy and status as doyen of English Literature was confirmed in 1882 by his appointment as director of Hautes Etudes and Professor of English Language and Literature at the Sorbonne. It was a great satisfaction to his English admirers to welcome him as Clark Lecturer at Cambridge this spring—still full of energy and new plans of conquest. His death at the age of sixty-four deprives his depart-

Photo G. C. Beresford, Yeoman's Row, S.W. **Mr. Edgar Jepson.**
Author of "The Triumphs of Tinker."

ment of one who not only reigned but governed, with profound knowledge and universal sway, the kingdom of English Learning in France, Belgium, and the Four Burgundies.

Photo J. Thompson, Ventnor. **Mr. Francis Gribble.**
Author of "The Pillar of Cloud."

Professor Beljame himself wrote comparatively little, his chief work being the well-known and cumbrously-entitled "Le Public et les hommes de lettres en Angleterre au dix huitième siecle," first issued in 1881, and published in 1883 and 1897. The Bibliography of this alone is a formidable affair. The book defies both its title and the researches of others. It is original, and tells us much about the licentious theatre that provoked Jeremy Collier and the new relations between booksellers and writers from Pope's time onwards. Beljame's work on the text of Shakespeare is small in quantity, but superb in quality. His short pamphlets, such as the one on the pronunciation of the name of John Law, the financier, or another, in Latin, upon the French words introduced by John Dryden into English, are miracles of specialism. So are his notes on Shelley, Shakespeare, Tennyson, Goldsmith, and Macaulay.

But few teachers have directly inspired, suggested, or even planned out a finer programme for their disciples than Beljame. His courses at the Sorbonne were famous for their minute research and their suggestiveness in regard to fields of enquiry for serious workers. Among the able and exhaustive monographs thus suggested to eminent French scholars, it will suffice to mention Angellier's admirable study of Robert Burns, Morel's monumental study of James Thomson, Texte's studies of interrelation between France and England in the age of Rousseau, Chevrillen on Sidney Smith and the Renaissance of Liberalism in England, Themas on the author of the "Night Thoughts," Cestre on the influence of the French Revolution upon English Poetry, Huchon on Crabbe, Feuillerat on John Lyly, Legouis on the Early Days of Wordsworth. The links of master and pupil connect almost all these highly specialised monographs, and at the end of the chain, always in view, stands Prof. Beljame.

There have, of course, been independent and very eminent French critics who have brought powers, often unrivalled, to bear upon English Literature, such, for instance, as Villemain, Chasles, Scheier, Michel, Montègut, Mezières, the great Henri Taine; and among his successors, M. Jusserand, Thureau-Dangin, Stapfer, Dapst, Davray, Schwob, Gohier, and an increasing multitude of critical and discriminating Anglophiles. But the Beljame influence is something apart, and remains distinct as having produced a series of biographical, critical, and linguistic studies of such ample proportion and learning as in their aggregate form the greatest compliment that one modern literature has ever rendered to one of its rivals.

Mr. Stuart J. Reid has just completed the "Life

and Letters of the First Earl of Durham," which Messrs. Longmans will publish this month. We understand that the biography, which has had no predecessor, has been prepared from the family papers and will contain an unpublished poem by Byron.

The same publishers announce another interesting collection of letters in the personal and literary correspondence of Robert, Earl of Lytton (Owen Meredith). The work is edited by his daughter, Lady Betty Balfour.

For the tenth year in succession, Mr. Andrew Lang has a new fairy book ready for the early Christmas market. This year its colour is "Orange." No child's Christmas stocking should lack this fruit.

We understand that the success of Miss Cholmondeley's new novel, "Prisoners," has exceeded the great expectations naturally formed of it. The book is already in a third edition. An interesting feature of its success was the immediate and simultaneous demand for it from London and the provinces. Before London or the press could give the usual lead, orders for the book reached the publishers from all parts of the country.

A new book on the later Georgian era will be ready immediately from the pen of Mr. Lewis Melville, the biographer of Thackeray. "The First Gentleman of Europe" will consist of two volumes, dealing with the life and times of George IV., attention being given to the social traits of the times rather than political affairs. A special feature of the work will be its carefully selected illustrations, including many portraits and caricatures.

A new work by Olive Malvery (Mrs. Archibald Mackirdy), author of "The Heart of Things," will be eagerly welcomed by all students of our present social conditions. It is well known that to gain her knowledge this intrepid journalist assumed many disguises. She passed at different times as a tramp, a street-singer, a factory hand, and a "sweated" dressmaker, both in London and in New York. A further result of her unique observations will appear immediately in a book entitled "In Thrall," which Messrs. Hutchinson are publishing.

Messrs. William Blackwood and Sons have acquired the English rights of the "Official History of the Naval Operations of the Russian-Japanese War," prepared by the Japanese Navy Department, and hope to publish the work early next year. It will consist of two large volumes, with many maps and plans, and should prove one of the most interesting and important contributions to naval history ever written.

"The Future in America" is the attractive title of Mr. H. G. Wells's new book, which Messrs. Chapman and Hall will publish immediately.

"The Letters of William Blake" have been edited with an introduction and notes by Mr. A. G. B. Russell. The volume will be issued this month by Messrs. Methuen.

The Life of the famous traveller, Mrs. Bishop (Isabella Bird), on which Miss Anna Stoddart has for more than a year been engaged, will be published immediately by Mr. John Murray.

Copyright Alston Rivers, Ltd. **Miss Marjorie Bowen.**
Author of "The Viper of Milan."

Miss Marjorie Bowen, whose portrait we reproduce above, has scored a remarkable success with her first book, "The Viper of Milan," the qualities of which at once attracted the attention of the critics. We understand that Miss Bowen is still in her teens, and that she completed this historical romance before the age of eighteen.

A volume of short stories by Mr. A. St. John Adcock will be published early this month by Mr. Francis Griffiths. The book will be called "Love in London," and will be chiefly humorous in interest. No one can be said really to "know" London, but Mr. Adcock's knowledge and insight are rivalled by very few living writers about "The Town."

A book which is likely to attract considerable attention is "Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving," by Mr. Bram Stoker. It will be produced by Mr. William Heinemann, in two volumes, about the middle of this month. Mr. Bram Stoker, having been intimately connected with Sir Henry Irving, both as business and literary manager and personal friend, for nearly thirty years, is able to write of the many-sided actor and artist as few persons could. The book promises to be a storehouse of anecdote and first-hand biographical matter. It will be illustrated, and interest

Photo Madame Pestel, Eastbourne. **Mr. Desmond Coke.**
Author of "The Comedy of Age."

will be added to it by the inclusion of portraits of many of the numerous men and women of note mentioned in its pages.

Another noticeable book which Mr. Heinemann is to publish towards the end of the month is "Madame Récamier," the book for which the Bordin Prize of 1,000 francs was awarded by the French Academy. The story of the life of this brilliant attractor of brilliant friends, and her social fame during a remarkable period, is told by M. Edouard Herriot, "according," he says, "to many hitherto unpublished documents." The book is in two-volume form, and in the second the author promises an account of Madame Récamier's friendship with Chateaubriand and of her famous receptions. The book, which will be enriched by many portraits, should reveal a fascinating side-picture of French history.

To the Right Hon. Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, Bart., we are indebted for kind permission to reproduce from the original portraits the medallion of Keats by Girometti and the miniature painting by Severn. The author of our leading article on Keats, Mr. H. Buxton Forman, C.B., has spared no pains in helping us with the illustration of this number, and we have in particular to thank him for our portrait of the poet's sister, Fanny, and of Haydon's life-mask of Keats from the painting by the poet's nephew.

Messrs. Newnes, Geo. Bell and Sons, and Mr. John Lane have kindly allowed us to reproduce a number of illustrations from their editions of Keats's poems. Other illustrations appear by the courtesy of Sir Edward J. Poynter, P.R.A., and Miss I. L. Gloag. Our four special supplements we owe to the kind permission of the following artists:—Mrs. Ernest Normand (the painting of "Isabella"), Mr. Henry M. Rheam ("La Belle Dame Sans Merci"), and Mr. J. E. Southall ("Isabella and Lorenzo").

Wholesale Reports of the Bookselling Trade.

(1) ENGLAND.

August 20th to September 20th, 1906.

During the earlier portion of the month under notice the slackness in demand was very noticeable; a healthier tone has, however, prevailed, and the past fortnight has developed a pronounced activity. A large proportion of the briskness existing at present in the wholesale houses is, of course, centred more especially in the accumulation rather than in the dissemination of wares, for the publishing centres are again asserting themselves, and a considerable quantity of attractions for the autumn season are already upon the market.

The tendency for prominent authors in 6s. novels to make an appeal to the public at an early part of the season was a noticeable feature during last year, and it is even more emphasised at the present time. Already quite a number of volumes by well-known writers are before the public, and among the latest issues the following have been very attractive:—"The Call of the Blood," "In the Days of the Comet," "Prisoners," "The Guarded Flame," "The Dream and the Business," "The Eglamore Portrait," and "The Viper of Milan." "The Treasure of Heaven" continues to prove one of the most successful of the author's productions, whilst "The Saint" has so increased in demand that a fifth edition is needed.

From the number of scholastic productions which have figured in the sales it is evident that school has again claimed the attention of the youthful portion of the community.

"Buster Browne," who proved so popular with the juveniles last season, is again with us, and two new volumes of extraordinary adventures are already making headway.

In 3s. 6d. fiction the two most prominent items have again been "The Man Who Rose Again" and "Wilhelmina in London." The "Extracts from Eve's Diary" has continued to be in request.

Two recent volumes from the pen of S. D. Gordon merit attention, "Quiet Thoughts on Jesus" and "Quiet Thoughts on Service." All the issues in this series command a ready sale.

The tragic death of Mrs. Craigie gave quite an impetus to the sale of her latest volume, mentioned earlier in the report, and a largely increased demand has been experienced for "Some Emotions and a Moral," always one of the most attractive of her productions.

A new volume on "Charles Dickens," by G. K. Chesterton, has sold freely. "From Libau to

Tsushima" is the diary of the ill-fated Captain Politovsky, and owing to the light it throws upon the life behind the scenes of Rojdestvensky's fleet, has attracted a considerable amount of attention. "Some of the Beauties of the 17th Century," "The Romantic East," together with a cheaper edition of Sir Frederick Treves' "On the Other Side of the Lantern," have all been free selling lines.

With the further addition of fifty volumes, the famous "Everyman's Library" now consists of 150 volumes in all. The last issue has up to the present been well received, and wide selection of the series appealing to diversified tastes has materially helped to ensure success.

"The Salvation Army and the Public," a volume dealing critically with the system and methods in general of the Army, has been in steady request.

Two works of an economic nature have also merited notice, "Glimpses into the Abyss" and "Women's Work and Wages."

The sale of sixpenny reprints has been very large, and although the holidays effect a preponderating influence in this line, there is an increasing output of such lines as Drummond's "Ascent of Man," which at all times appeal to the thoughtful public.

The following is a list of the books which have been most in demand during the past month:—

Six Shilling Novels.

The Treasure of Heaven. By Marie Corelli. (Constable.)
Coniston. By Winston Churchill. (Macmillan.)
The Viper of Milan. By Marjorie Bowen. (Alston Rivers.)
The Guarded Flame. By W. B. Maxwell. (Methuen.)
A Persian Rose Leaf. By Andrew Haggard. (Long.)
Prisoners. By Mary Cholmondeley. (Hutchinson)
Lady Betty Across the Water. By C. N. and A. M. Williamson. (Methuen.)
The Saint. By A. Fogazzaro. (Hodder and Stoughton.)
The Sovereign Remedy. By F. A. Steel. (Heinemann.)
I Know a Maiden. By E. M. Albanesi. (Methuen.)
The Dream and the Business. By J. O. Hobbes. (Unwin.)
The Trials of Commander McTurk. By C. J. C. Hyne. (J. Murray.)
The Call of the Blood. By R. Hichens. (Methuen.)
In the Days of the Comet. By H. G. Wells. (Macmillan.)

The Man Who Rose Again. By J. Hocking, 3s. 6d. (Hodder and Stoughton.)
Wilhelmina in London. By Barry Pain. 3s. 6d. (Long.)
From Libau to Tsushima. By E. S. Politovsky. 6s. (J. Murray.)
The Romantic East. By W. Delmar. 10s 6d. (Black.)
Wild Life in East Anglia. By W. A. Dutt. 7s. 6d. net. (Methuen.)
On the Other Side of the Lantern. By Sir F. Treves. 6s. net. (Cassell.)
Some Emotions and a Moral. By J. O. Hobbes. 1s. net. (Unwin.)
Quiet Thoughts on Jesus. By S. D. Gordon. 2s. 6d. net. (Hodder and Stoughton.)
Quiet Thoughts on Service. By S. D. Gordon. 2s. 6d. net. (Oliphant.)
Buster Browne and his Dog Tige. 4to. 3s. 6d. net. (Dean.)
Charles Dickens. By G. K. Chesterton. 7s. 6d. net. (Methuen.)
The Salvation Army and the Public. By J. Manson. 6s. (Routledge.)
Glimpses into the Abyss. By M. Higgs. 3s. 6d. net. (P. S. King.)
Women's Work and Wages. By E. Cadbury and others. 6s. (Unwin.)
"Saturday" Bridge. By W. Dalton. 5s. net. (West Strand Publishing Co.)
Sowing and Reaping. By G. A. Sowter. 2s. 6d. (Nisbet.)

(2) SCOTLAND.

August 20th to September 19th, 1906.

The success of the month, if not of the season, has undoubtedly been Marie Corelli's "The Treasure of Heaven," a good, full book which has been handled by many of the critics kindly. Being well ordered by the trade before publication, ensured a special push being made, and a good show on publication, with the result that the sales have been very large. The book is still going well, but is now showing signs of slowing down; yet we should be surprised if it does not continue to sell right on to the end of the year. No doubt there will be a fresh demand just before Christmas.

There have been several other important volumes of fiction issued this month which have sold exceedingly well. Among these are the last work of the late Mrs. Craigie (John Oliver Hobbes), "The Dream and the Business," whose tragic end aroused special attention to this volume; the authoress of "Red Pottage" new novel, "Prisoners"; "The Call of the Blood," by the author of "The Garden of Allah"; "The Car of Destiny," by C. N. and A. M. Williamson; "The Trial of Commander McTurk," by J. C. Cutcliffe Hyne; "Benita," by H. Rider Haggard; and "The Wickhamses," by W. Pett Ridge.

The following, which are not quite new, are still having a steady sale: "The Invasion of 1910," by William Le Queux; "Coniston," by Winston Churchill; "The Sovereign Remedy," by F. A. Steele; "The Confessions of a Princess"; "Count Bunker," by J. S. Clouston; and "Lady Betty Across the Water," by C. N. and A. M. Williamson.

Photo Nieczkowski. **Henry Sienkiewicz.**
Whose novel, "The Field of Glory," is reviewed in this number.

"The Saint," by Antonio Fogazzaro, and "The Jungle," by Upton Sinclair, continue in good demand.

With the reopening of the schools, after the summer vacation, the booksellers are busy supplying their younger clients with their respective wants. With some booksellers this is a time of great worry, as teachers and scholars are alike void of patience. We have had a good many changes in the books this season. These have been mainly in the following subjects—Arithmetic, Euclid, Geometry, English and History Readers, French and German Grammars. Many of our old familiar friends, school-books of long standing, are year by year being pushed out by the new competitors. This year we find several of the popular reprints of the classics being taken up for school use.

Two new volumes from that most popular American religious writer, S. D. Gordon, promise well; they are "Quiet Talks about Jesus" and "Quiet Talks on Service." Owing to the death of the author of "Rests by the River," the Rev. George Matheson, we have had several inquiries for his book, while "The Days of His Flesh" still continues to sell, a new edition having been issued.

The trade have been anxiously awaiting a reprint of that great book by the late Henry Grey Graham, "The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century." It is now to be had at the popular price of 5s. net, and should have a large sale. The new popular edition of Sir F. Treves's "The Other Side of the Lantern," at 6s. net, is selling well.

The Ruskin reprints at 1s. net, and leather 1s. 6d. net, are very popular; the latest volume is "Queen of the Air."

The following is a list of the books which have been most in demand during the past month:—

Six Shilling Novels.

The Treasure of Heaven. By Marie Corelli. (Constable.)
The Dream and the Business. By John Oliver Hobbes. (Unwin.)
Prisoners. By Mary Cholmondeley. (Methuen.)
The Call of the Blood. By Robert Hichens. (Methuen.)
The Car of Destiny. By C. N. and A. M. Williamson. (Methuen.)
The Trial of Commander McTurk. By C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne. (Murray.)
Benita. By H. Rider Haggard. (Cassell.)
The Wicknamses. By W. Pett Ridge. (Methuen.)
The Guarded Flame. By W. B. Maxwell. (Methuen.)
The Invasion of 1910. By Wm. Le Queux. (Nash.)
Coniston. By Winston Churchill. (Macmillan.)
The Sovereign Remedy. By F. A. Steele. (Heinemann.)
The Confessions of a Princess. (J. Long.)
Count Bunker. By J. S. Clouston. (Blackwood.)
Lady Betty Across the Water. By C. N. and A. M. Williamson. (Methuen.)
The Saint. By Antonio Fogazzaro. (Hodder and Stoughton.)
The Jungle. By Upton Sinclair. (Heinemann.)

Miscellaneous.

The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century. By Henry Grey Graham. 5s. net. (Black.)
The Other Side of the Lantern. By Sir F. Treves. 6s. net. (Cassell.)
Charles Dickens. By G. K. Chesterton. 7s. 6d. net. (Methuen.)
Rests by the River. By Rev. Geo. Matheson. 5s. (Hodder and Stoughton.)
Ruskin Reprints. 1s. net. and 1s. 6d. net. (Allen.)
Quiet Talks about Jesus. By S. D. Gordon. 2s. 6d. net. (Hodder and Stoughton.)
Quiet Talks on Service. By S. D. Gordon. 2s. 6d. net. (Oliphant.)
Collins' Home Library. (50 titles.) 1s. (Collins.)
Cassell's Standard Library. (17 titles.) 1s. (Cassell.)
The Days of His Flesh. By David Smith. 10s. 6d. net. (Hodder and Stoughton.)
Collins' Pocket Novels. (50 titles.) 1s. net, 2s. net. (Collins.)

"THE BOOKMAN" GALLERY.

"THE BOOKMAN" £100 PRIZE WINNERS.

Mr. William James Marx, the writer of "For the Admiral," to whom we have awarded the £100 prize for the best story for boys, is a native of Bristol. As a young man, while engaged in the teaching profession, he devoted much of his leisure time to the writing of short stories for magazines and newspapers. Afterwards he turned his attention to boys' literature.

The account of how "For the Admiral" came to be written is full of interest. Mr. Marx himself did not notice our advertisement, but his wife, having read an announcement of the competition, suggested that he should write a story and send it in.

Several difficulties presented themselves. Mr. Marx was exceedingly busy, and the time was short. There were just six weeks to plan and write the story, to get it typed, and to forward the MS. to the offices of The Bookman. It seemed an impossible task, but his decision once taken, Mr. Marx resolutely set to work.

"I shut myself into my room," said the writer, "with a scribbling tablet and a fountain pen, and began to think. First came the choice of a subject, and finally I decided upon a stirring adventure story with a historical background. Then casting about for a central figure, I hit upon the heroic Coligny, whose splendid character, however imperfectly delineated, would, I felt sure, appeal to British boys. The selection of Coligny as the principal historical personage naturally made the massacre of Bartholomew the culminating point of the story, and nothing remained now but to piece together the actual facts of history to form a framework for the romance."

Having obtained his skeleton, the writer began to clothe it, or, rather, to allow it to clothe itself, for Mr. Marx is a thorough believer in the evolutionary method.

"No," he explained in answer to our question, "I do not care to have anything but the barest outline. I have tried once or twice to elaborate a story before writing it, but the result has been unsuccessful. The characters simply would go their own way, and the attempt to make them go through a cut-and-dried performance only wasted time."

"Do you mean that when you began writing 'For the Admiral' you had no idea how the story would work out?"

"Exactly. For instance, when I had finished the first chapter I hadn't the faintest idea of what would happen in the second. It was enough that the hero was fairly launched, and he just had to make things move until Coligny's death. Of course, there was always the historical framework to be considered."

"Then you look upon 'For the Admiral' as more than a mere adventure story?"

"Yes, because I have endeavoured to give a fairly accurate description of a momentous event in French history, and of the persons who bore a chief part in it. At the same time, I have tried to avoid the prosy passages which the average boy skips with such enthusiasm."

"Would you mind giving a rough outline of the story?"

"Well, it opens in 1586, and the hero, Edmond Le

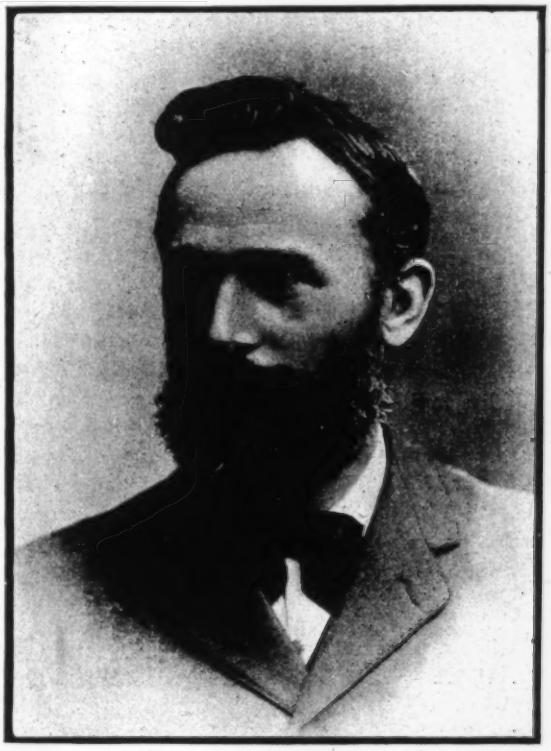

Photo Debenham and Smith, Southampton. **Mr. W. J. Marx.**

Blanc, a young Huguenot, after various exciting adventures, conveys a warning to Coligny that the Queen-Mother and the Guises have formed a conspiracy against him and Condé. Soon afterwards civil war breaks out, and Edmond, as a member of Coligny's household, finds himself in the thick of the fray. From that time he shares in all his patron's misfortunes and successes, accompanies him upon his wonderful march, and is nearly involved in the Paris massacre. Interspersed with the historical narrative is an account of his private fortunes: how he lost his estates, and how he nearly lost his life through the plotting of an unscrupulous enemy. Just the tiniest thread of sentiment, in which the persons chiefly interested are Edmond's sister, and his two comrades—one of them an Englishman—runs through the book; but healthy boys don't want love stories, and there isn't enough to offend their taste."

Photo Russell and Sons. **Miss M. V. Wheelhouse.**

"Who are the chief historical characters besides Coligny?"

"Henry of Navarre and his mother, Condé, King Charles, his brother Anjou, the Queen-Mother, and the Guises all figure in the narrative."

"It must have been a heavy strain to get the story finished in time!"

"I feared it would be, but was agreeably mistaken.

Photo by T. and R. Annan. **Miss Christina Gowans Whyte.**

The story evolved itself as fast as I could write it down, and as my wife typed every chapter directly it was finished, there was no delay at the end. I only hope that the boys for whom it was written will feel as much pleasure in reading as I did in writing it."

Miss Christina Gowans Whyte, the winner of two out of the three prizes, is a native of Helensburgh, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John G. Whyte mentioned in Sir Wemyss Reid's "Life of William Black." She was brought up in an atmosphere which should have been conducive to any kind of artistic development, her father having been well known as taking keen interest in all literary and artistic matters. Music was her first study, but the accident of musical and other criticisms being required in a Glasgow paper led to her being invited to contribute, and she kept this up till going to London, where she finally made writing her chief occupation.

Except when under contract with a magazine, she has invariably written rather contrary than according to order. She believes it is better to make the public want a new thing than to give it what it knows by heart already.

"The Adventures of Merrywink" was begun some years ago at the request of an artist who wanted verses or short stories for illustrations. The story ran out of bounds, and though they considered making a book of it at the time, other matters intervened, and it was shelved for the moment. Afterwards she added to and rewrote the story in book form, but again put it aside, as she had plans for another book which she wanted to finish before this one appeared.

The collaboration with Miss Wheelhouse came as an inspiration on a chance meeting at the Lyceum Club, of which both are members, when Miss Whyte informed the artist about The Bookman competition, of which she had not till then been aware. They were so late in the day of thinking of it, that it seemed impossible that Miss Wheelhouse should be able to finish the drawings in time. That the book appeared by 4th July Miss Whyte attributes entirely to her collaborator's enthusiasm.

Miss Whyte has often collaborated with artists, and the fact of drawings being promised has often produced her part of the work. Such a collaboration was responsible for the little guide book to the London shops, "Olivia's Shopping, and How She Does It," written partly to justify a statement that shops ought to be criticised like pictures, and partly to fit into Miss Elsa Halm's drawings.

Miss M. V. Wheelhouse, whose admirable illustrations to the prize story for children are likely to attract much favourable attention, is a native of Leeds, where — and at Filey — she lived prior to her student days in Paris. The only school she has worked in was the Academie Delécluze, in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs, where she spent three years, returning several times after she began working on her own account. During one of her terms there Miss Wheelhouse had the advantage of much friendly help and counsel from the late M. Jean Charles Cazin, who was greatly interested in her work. For a short time Miss Wheelhouse had a studio at Scarborough, but has now been settled in London for several years.

In the work of adjudication the Editor of The Bookman had the assistance of several well-known authors of successful juvenile books. It is satisfactory to be able to state that in each of the three awards the verdict was unanimous. We have no doubt that it will interest our readers to see the following quotations from our adjudicators' reports on Miss Whyte's brilliant story for girls, and her equally successful story for children, so splendidly illustrated by Miss Wheelhouse.

"THE STORY-BOOK GIRLS."

"It is a story to win the hearts of all girls, and at the same time to help and influence them for good. In the very first chapter Miss Whyte introduces us to real intimacy in the family circle of the Cleavers, a circle admirably free from stiffness and formality, with each member of it presenting a distinct individuality, and all the attractions of faults and qualities which girls enjoy reading about. The Cleavers, we learn, have grown up filled with fervent admiration for another family in the neighbourhood—'the story-book girls'—a family with which hitherto they have had no intercourse, but whose manners, dress, doings, and general behaviour have fired the young Cleavers with the desire to imitate and emulate. The 'story-book girls' are richer, grander, altogether more beautiful than themselves, the Cleavers think, and they worship from afar. But soon after the beginning of this story accident brings them all together, and after that the chronicle is one of bright, everyday life, wholesome and lively, telling of big and small troubles, loyalties, sacrifices, pleasures, and economies. The children merge into young men and women, and the child-worship merges into closer relationships; while the charm of home-life fills the pages, and the little group of characters becomes as hard to part with as a circle of chosen friends."

"THE ADVENTURES OF MERRYWINK."

"From the birth of this hero (which itself was attended by incidents unusual even in fairyland) his career is made thrilling by adventures which are quite original, and will be entrancing to children. He starts out, this Merrywink, upon travels which bring him into the company of one of the most bewitching little princesses of mischief that can be imagined. It is a beguiling theme, the tricks and doings and demands of this naughty princess, who has all her life made everyone else's life a torment, and who still goes on in the same fashion until——! But that is the story, and Miss Whyte has told it in a most gay and sparkling manner. To come to the illustrations, words here seem inadequate to describe the wonderfully perfect work of Miss Wheelhouse—at times it seems as if she had called upon the aid of the fairies themselves, so minute and delicate are the details of her pictures. Children may welcome her as a new artist of their very own, one who seems to have hailed from a fairyland Art school, and knows the country and the people first-hand."

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THE READER.

KEATS.

By H. Buxton Forman, C.B.

THE spirits of Keats and Shelley "live in stirring times." Happy though it may be for them that their disembodiment took place before the coming of the motor-omnibus and the literal fulfilment of the prophecy of Nahum about the "chariots raging in the streets" and "justling one against another in the broad ways," we cannot help speculating upon the disadvantages that their fame may yet suffer from the mere fact of their birth a century too soon. For how splendid and how exhilarating would be the spectacle of a Shelley carrying his spiritual sorrows, his infinite sympathies with suffering humanity, amid the sordid turmoil of this England in the twentieth century, keeping his optimism undimmed in the horrid glare of the electric light, his belief in a dawn when gold would suddenly have "lost its power" in spite of the Stock Exchange and Wall Street and the "Jungle," and his vision, unclouded by the dust of electric traction, still fixed upon

"The wilderness of this Elysian earth,"

which he and others would even yet try to

"Till for the promise of a later birth."

How lovable would be the apparition of a Keats, born in London of good Devonshire stock, with a yearning —one might almost say, a writhing—passion for the loveliness of nature's handiwork upon the crust of the earth, with an equal passion for perfection of form in art, and an innate West Country humour subjected to a metropolitan alterative, still able to find in the very track of the motor-omnibus that even the sweet peas about London are "on tiptoe for a flight." For he would still have found it so, still have seen that the silver-birches of Hampstead Heath, notwithstanding the advent of the million-footed 'Arry and 'Arriet from the East End, and the approach of the twopenny tube, with its trampling "morlock" myriads, show as of old the exquisitely variegated sheen of their bark above the ignoble faces and hateful talk, and cast their fluttering flecks of shadow upon the just and the unjust. Yes! John Keats would have recognized now, as well as in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, that, although in an evil mood of mind it might be hard to walk the streets of London and not "hate as he walked," a calmer mood and a deeper vision dawned with more walking even of the streets, and mankind, even 'Arry and 'Arriet, lacerating his ears with their talk and Hampstead Heath with their feet and hands, grouped themselves infallibly with God's other creatures, and became "each and every," a creature that "hath a purpose, and his eyes are bright with it."

Stirring times indeed! Neither Keats nor Shelley would know the green land in its wider aspects if they descended upon it now and saw how that which the human spirit in its arrogance calls progress had been engaged in a new titanic form of unvirgilian "cross-ploughing" known as railway construction.

Stirring times indeed in another sense does the spirit of Keats especially live in. There is scarcely a poet of note whose work has passed since his day into the solid fabric of English literature, but Keats's soul has stirred within him to one result or another. Tennyson would have been absolutely a poet—a singer, and nothing else, Keats or no Keats; but he would not have been, in all particulars, the same Tennyson, had Keats not lived and worked. Browning is but little affected by Keats so far as the fabric of his own work is concerned; but his wife must have studied Keats closely if not very fruitfully. The Pre-Raphaelites, whether in literature or in pictorial art, had him vitally as a part of their background; and it is difficult to find the notable in English poetic literature who owed him nothing.

And in yet another sense does the spirit of Keats live on in stirring times; for here are all of us critics, bibliographers, collectors, and students, stirring wherever and whatever we can to find fresh material, new *data* for what is sometimes called his glorification—"Myself not least, but" . . . well, not "honoured of them all," but honoured by some of them and tolerated by others as the victim of a mistaken zeal and a misdirected enthusiasm. And still there are things to find out. "What!" say you, O reader of this double number of The Bookman, "still things to find out? Why, haven't you and Professor Colvin and Mr. Ernest de Sélincourt found out, with the assistance of many a helpful hand, everything there is to find?" Take a concrete instance for answer; nearly thirty years ago I found out the unpublished letters to Fanny Brawne, and of course published them—dividing the lovers of Keats into two camps—one "raging horribly" against me, and the other against them. In the letter which stood originally as No. 1, and now stands as No. 115 in my collected edition of Keats's Letters (Reeves and Turner), and as No. 117 in the "Complete" Keats (Vol. v., Gowans and Gray), the poet broke out of the trammels of literal prose and expressed his jealous mood thus in blank verse:—

> "To see those eyes I prize above my own
> Dart favors on another—
> And those sweet lips (yielding immortal nectar)
> Be gently press'd by any but myself—
> Think, think Francesca, what a cursed thing
> It were beyond expression!"
>
> J. -

He introduced the passage with the words, "Some lines I read the other day are continually ringing a peal in my ears"; nevertheless, beneath the poetry, before he went on with his letter and signed "J. Keats," he affixed what I have "transliterated" as a capital J—to use a word which appears to be the correct classical slang of the moment, unless I mistake Mr. de Sélincourt's meaning when he describes an exact print from a manuscript as a transliteration. What I want to convey by it here, if I may, is that Keats wrote a beautiful capital J under those lines of verse, and that I am beholden to the printer of The Bookman for doing the same as he is

From the painting in the National Portrait Gallery executed at Rome in 1821 by Joseph Severn.
Rischgitz Collection.

John Keats.

doing in regard to all these remarks—putting, that is to say, a printed typographical substitute for every manuscript letter, including that J. Now, when I first read this love-letter No. 1 in Keats's delightful script, my thought was—"How charmingly he breaks into the tongue of Shakespeare, of Jonson, of Beaumont and Fletcher, the speech that was natural to the memorable Elizabethan or Jacobean dramatists—the speech which was in the air in that great semi-barbaric epoch." Then arose the misgiving—"Perhaps I am mistaken about that J; perhaps it is not meant to say to his lady, 'See how I, your John, your Keats, have said what I want to say in verse—you are to read this not as an apt quotation of mine from some one or other's work, but as my very thought, uttered to you in my very words, as one of the seventeenth century men with whom I have lived so closely might have said it, and uttered in verse because verse is more intense than prose.' Perhaps it is a quotation after all! How can I be sure that he was not alluding to Brown's Ben Jonson? I cannot afford to put a note here lest I give occasion to the ungodly to blaspheme." For I was about to print the letters; and I knew what sort of a storm there would be. It came; and it blew over; and the material whereby we know Keats is the richer. But in those days I did not feel hardy enough to brave the risk of the gibe that I ought to have known those lines were in *The Isle of Gulls*, or *The Magnificent Entertainment*, or *The Devil's Law-Case*, or something or other which I did not and do not happen to have read. So the letter remained to speak for itself; and when in 1883 I published all Keats's writings I was still too timid to attribute those lines of verse roundly to Keats, and too ignorant to say they were by such and such an Elizabethan or Jacobean, not having in any literal sense "been there to see." "For the present," I said to myself in 1883, "I will keep my counsel, and not give the lines among Keats's poetic fragments; but if in, say, a quarter of a century I am still alive and in the Keats business, and no one has found out and let me know in the meantime that the lines cannot be Keats's because they occur, say, in that highly curious and entertaining play *The Bloody Banquet*, then I will put them in my next edition, and take my chance: one must risk something!" My perennial frame of mind in this respect has been expressed in the words of the collect: "Stir up, we beseech thee"; but stir and stir and stir as we will, no one comes forward with an announcement of some other authorship of the lines, and no one adds an iota—even a serif—of evidence to my "transliterated" capital J of 1878.

Often and often have I lounged luxuriously on Sunday afternoon turning over the leaves of Ben Jonson—more pampered by the fates than Keats, poor lad, who splashed his black-currant jelly on "Brown's Ben Jonson," and had to create a word to describe the resultant stain when he had licked the spot and failed to annul the accident; for here was I turning over the leaves, not of "Brown's Ben Jonson," or Jones's, or Smith's, but my own copy of the 1616-1640 folio in two sumptuous blue levant morocco bindings by Rivière, instead of having to confess ruefully that I had damaged Brown's "very best book" by leaving on it, not a blue stain, nor a purple stain, but a "purplue" stain. Even if I have fallen asleep over my researches without finding what I sought, and peradventure crumpled a leaf as my spirit passed into the happier realm of those who dream,—well, it was only my own book, and so much the worse for the man who buys it when my sleep becomes sound enough for that transfer to be probable. "How wonderful is death" for the right-minded bookman—"death and his brother sleep!" When the grimmer and more permanent brother claims him, he relinquishes his plunder without a murmur, and some one else takes his books, and perhaps finds in them what he has failed to find! Often on one of these luxurious, researching, dozing Sunday afternoons have I turned over the leaves of my Beaumont and Fletcher—no such rubbishy, ill-printed, mal-edited royal 8vo Beaumont and Fletcher as that which Keats made priceless for ever by writing in it "Spirit here that reignest" and "Bards of Passion and of Mirth," but the *editio princeps*, the folio of 1647, and not only so, but the very copy which Edward Fitzgerald had owned and read, and which, for the last few years, has permitted me to read those bards of passion

and of mirth with the added relish one has in being even the unworthy successor of Fitzgerald, drawing inspiration from Fitz's shoes, so to speak. But, so far, I have not found the "Think, think Francesca" lines; and perhaps the next man who owns Fitz's copy will stay awake longer and find it. If one were unable to keep an equal mind in face of misfortune—

"What a cursed thing
It were beyond expression!"

But I do not fancy the lines are going to turn up now, unless Mr. de Sélincourt will bustle up with his already highly successful and instructive explorations of the wide field of English literature for sources of Keats's speech and thought. I am already indebted to him for reading through all Shakespeare's works on purpose to convict me of wrongly attributing a certain utterance of Shakespeare's to Shakespeare; and he may yet add the positive service of finding the Francesca lines to the negative service of failing to find the Shakespeare quotation.

I do not attach much importance to the phrase, "Some lines I read the other day." Keats had often "read the other day" what he wrote the other day. And there were lovers' reasons for being cryptic and bashful about those lines, and not confessing too openly, even to Francesca, that they were his own. In two years or so, if nothing untoward happens, I shall put them among his poetical works. Meantime some slumbrous Sunday afternoons shall be given to ransacking the long row of little scrubby quarto seventeenth century plays.

Ever since this *causerie* has been in course of production "some lines I read the other day" have been "continually ringing a peal in my ears." They are from an allegorical poem wherein an elderly poet is depicted as "in parle with" no less a personage than Time, duly adorned with a handy forelock, and armed with a scythe of portentous sweep. "Bards of my age," says the old poet in reply to a covert sneer of Time's—

"Bards of my age one often meets:
We're more than twice as old as Keats—
Whom the gods loved and gathered young—
To have his dirge by Shelley sung.
We've heard of your revenges, sir;
If Keats had lived another year—
Or, say, two years—on this poor scene,
Why, *Adonais* had not been,
And peradventure Keats's breath
Had died in song of Shelley's death!"

"Whom the gods love die young." H'm, well, like the last-named elderly poet, I've lost my chance. And yet it seems as if the gods must love me a little—if only for not being a pusillanimously god-fearing man; for circumstances occur which at the very least show that there is no ill-feeling on their part towards me. See now!—there is a beautiful sonnet by Keats beginning—

"The day is gone and all its sweets are gone,"

and of that, if I had died even as young as I was a year ago, I should not have seen any authoritative manuscript, and my shade might have stumbled across the shade of Keats somewhere in the "illimitable inane," not properly equipped to discuss the true arrangement of the quatrains "at the fountain-head." While this *causerie* has been in gestation, I have also had to deal, in the preface to one more new edition of Keats, with the bearings of a transcript by Woodhouse, which ("stirring times" again!) Lord Crewe recently unearthed among his father's papers, and which Mr. de Sélincourt, who has not yet lost the chance of proving, by an early death, that the gods love him (the dear gods forbid!)—had an earlier opportunity of seeing than I had. He is quite charming on the subject of this Woodhouse transcript—shows himself the admirable critic that we all know him to be, by pointing out that there is a variation in the direction of Shakespearean effect in the arrangement of the quatrains. The sonnet has hitherto stood thus:

"The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone!
Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and softer breast,
Warm breath, light whisper, tender semi-tone,
Bright eyes, accomplish'd shape, and lang'rous waist!
Faded the flower and all its budded charms,
Faded the sight of beauty from my eyes,
Faded the shape of beauty from my arms,
Faded the voice, warmth, whiteness, paradise—
Vanish'd unseasonably at shut of eve,
When the dusk holiday—or holinight
Of fragrant-curtain'd love begins to weave
The woof of darkness thick, for hid delight;

From a drawing by E. J. Sullivan. **John Keats.**
(Reproduced from "The Poems of John Keats," by kind permission of Messrs. Geo. Newnes, Ltd.)

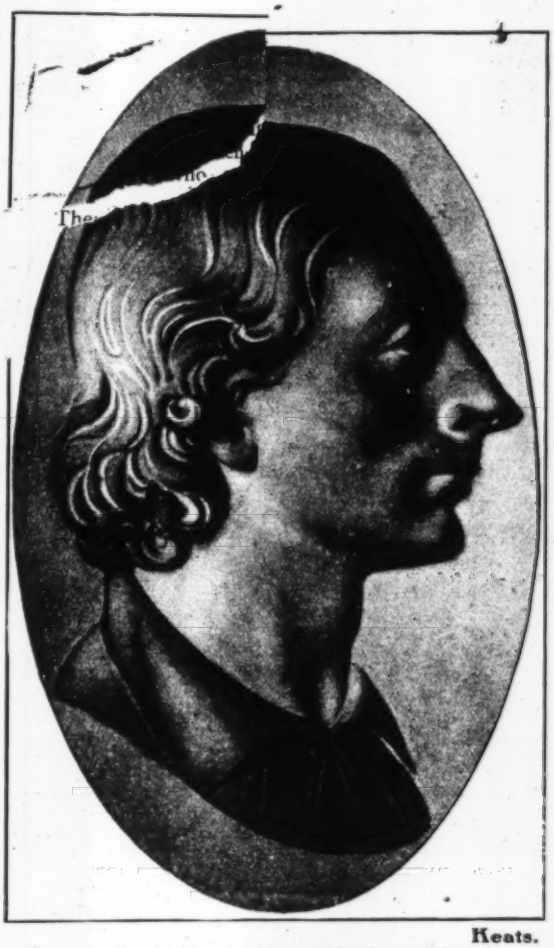
But, as I've read love's missal through to-day,
He'll let me sleep, seeing I fast and pray."

In the new Woodhouse version the word *tranced* stands in place of *light* in the third line, the second and third quatrains are transposed, and a problem is set for us to solve as best we may. Mr. de Sélincourt knows, just as we others know, that a transcript by Woodhouse means a correct copy of something or other—that, in the nature of things, it represents some sort of holograph authority. He knows, just as we others know, that Lord Houghton, working in the first half of last century, allowed himself a latitude of editorship forbidden to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century bookman. He suggests that, as the Woodhouse transcript is the only known manuscript authority for this sonnet, Lord Houghton may have thought it proper, nay, serviceable to the fame of Keats, to arrange the quatrains of the sonnet as they appear in all editions up to the present day, including Mr. de Sélincourt's own edition—where the new version only appears in the notes at the end of the volume. Such being the situation in respect of this sonnet, the choice lay between two hypotheses:—(1) that Lord Houghton had had another (and, as I think it could be shown to be a better) manuscript, while the Woodhouse copy had been produced from a confused pencil or other draft in which the order was debatable; and (2) that Woodhouse had worked from the deliberate, the only manuscript of Keats, "the real Simon Pure," and Lord Houghton had taken the liberty of working, to the result known, from Woodhouse's copy. It was not proved that Woodhouse copied with perfect accuracy the poet's holograph; and I, for one, preferring the Houghton version, should unhesitatingly have challenged the evidence against it—and favourable to the new version as the final one. Then, just in time, stepped down "the quiet gods" and placed in my hand a manuscript of the sonnet, unquestionably in the autograph of John Keats, and said: "Don't give yourself away! Read! We are not absolutely bigoted in favour of the young." So I read; and, behold, the manuscript was that which had been transcribed by Woodhouse! That was clearly quite enough to give one pause; but it by no means suffices to close the case with a verdict against Lord Houghton. However, let the reader judge for himself; on page 16 is the draft reproduced stroke for stroke from the paper I got from the quiet gods. Perhaps some other day I shall be similarly favoured with Keats's fair copy (if he made one) for Fanny Brawne; and perhaps that will turn out to have the Houghton arrangement of quatrains, and read *light* for *tranced*.

Now, as to the sudden apparition of this awfully pathetic paper—for there was pathos even in the folds and creases of it, tragedy in the very marks that indicate of what size it had been folded, how long kept secret, and in what particular pocket borne about by the poet, and many other things which my friend Mr. de Sélincourt would interpret with poignant sympathy, and a perfect intelligence of Keats's mind and modes of work—as to this sudden apparition of the scrap in my hands—"Why," I asked myself, "this favour from the quiet gods to me rather than to him, who had only Woodhouse's copy, if it were not to assure me of what I have not infrequently suspected?" Often, indeed, have I dreamed that the gods in very truth bear one no grudge for not dying young, but on the contrary take up, now and again, some such attitude as would be indicated by the words, "Ah! poor man! we forgot to call him away from earth when he was young—let us give him a *solatium* to mark our pity for the length of his sojourn down there!" A *solatium* is certainly not a suggestion of hatred; and as this thought passed through my mind, while I yet held in my hand the holograph draft of that beautiful sonnet, and felt in my heart the unspeakable agony of its composition, agony ending for Keats in such an exhaustion of passion by its own force as left him convinced that he should sleep that night,—down fluttered before me a second paper, bearing another sonnet of Keats's! This one was written in the bold, round, fascinating script of his youthful period—written, I judged at a glance, before he had published the little volume of 1817. This time there was no room for doubting which of the quiet gods had been my benefactor; for the particular deity was concerned in the text of that sonnet in a curious way and in a marked degree. It was Phœbus Apollo, doing a stroke of business on his own account, and choosing me to put things right for him with mankind. Overwhelming honour! With bared, bowed head I read a sonnet in Keats's writing, with great respect for the wondrous gifts of his youthful and rapidly-shaping mind, albeit, solemnly as I have seemed for years to go on editing that sonnet, I have never been able to read a proof of it without snickering up my sleeve. It was the sonnet to Spenser, hitherto printed thus:—

"Spenser! a jealous honourer of thine,
A forester deep in thy midmost trees,
Did last eve ask my promise to refine
Some English that might strive thine ear to please.
But Elfin Poet 'tis impossible
For an inhabitant of wintry earth
To rise like Phœbus with a golden quill
Fire-wing'd and make a morning in his mirth.
It is impossible to escape from toil
O' the sudden and receive thy spiriting:
The flower must drink the nature of the soil
Before it can put forth its blossoming:
Be with me in the summer days and I
Will for thine honour and his pleasure try."

Up aloft, doubtless, the white-armed goddesses tittered as Apollo pitched the paper down. Doubtless they whispered to each other, "What matters it to Phœbus how many bardlings may be pleased to describe him brandishing a golden quill—figuring as the gilt-gingerbread deity of the wretched ones who strive to worship and honour him?" But somehow Apollo thought it did matter, and had decreed that that futile imagery should disappear from his votary's early attempt; for, as I came to the silly seventh line, at which I had so often laughed in my finite but arrogant wisdom, behold there was nothing left to laugh at; the bristling quill was not there; but in its place was the whole attitude and spirit of the god of the golden bow when he subdues the shadows of the night and drives them into the irrevocable past. The golden quill had never, in Keats's



Keats.

From the medallion by Girometti in the possession of Sir Charles Dilke.

Keats.

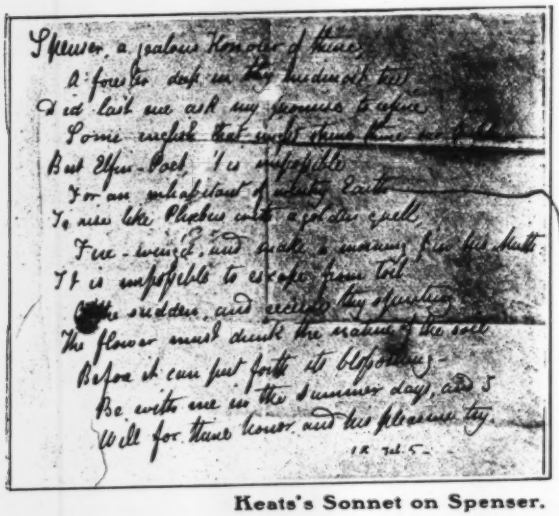
From a charcoal drawing by J. Severn in the South Kensington Museum.

Keats.

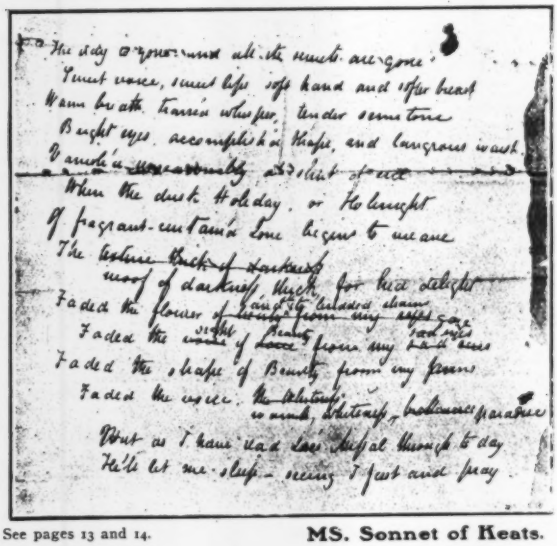
From the original water-colour miniature by J. Severn, given by the poet to Fanny Brawne, and now in the possession of Sir Charles Dilke.

The Poet's Sister Fanny.

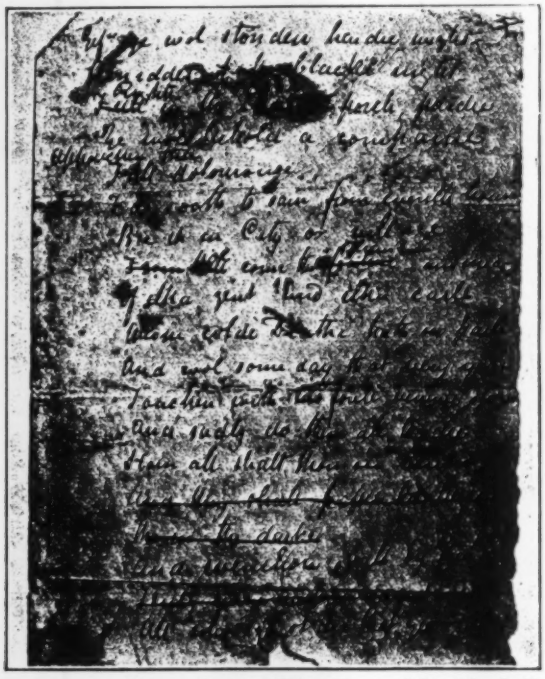
From a hitherto unpublished portrait by her son in the possession of Mr. H. Buxton Forman.



Keats's Sonnet on Spenser.



See pages 13 and 14. MS. Sonnet of Keats.



Lines from "The Eve of St. Mark."

most Leigh-Huntian days, degraded his pretty little sonnet to ridicule-point; but instead of it was an expression of great suggestiveness—whether meant for a bit of Leigh-Huntian license or taken from the usage of Shakespeare and his coevals, who shall say?—for does not Lady Macbeth describe the projected murder of Duncan as "our great quell"? On this page is the sonnet as Keats wrote it; and the reader will see that there is no doubt whatever as to the word which we have all for over sixty years been printing as *quill*—no doubt whatever that it is the uncommon (perhaps re-invented) substantive *quell!*

The tittering of the white-armed goddesses doubtless died before the frown of Apollo; I am not sure that the whole of the Olympians were not touched by my look of abject apology to Apollo's darling, "the Muse's son of promise." At all events they had not done with me; for, as I laid the sonnet reverently aside, after getting a photographer to take its portrait, yet another scrap floated on to my outspread hands—a soiled, torn, crumpled little leaf enough, written on both sides, all full of curious quasi-Chaucerian words—almost Rowleyan words, some of them, in their strained antiquity. The side which lay uppermost was quite unfamiliar to me, though I suspected at once what it was; I turned it over and read these couplets—I copy them literally from the manuscript:—

"Als writith he of swevenis,
Men han beforne they waken in Blis
Whanne thate hir friendes thinke hem bounde
In crimpede shrowde farre undergrounde;
And how a litling child mote be
A saint er its nativitie
Gif that the modre (God her blesse)
Kepen in solitarinesse
An[d] kissen devoute the holie croce."

So this was, in very truth, a fragment of *The Eve of St. Mark* that I was holding; and the kindly gods had revealed to me how nearly right Rossetti was when he sent me that extract from *The Unseen World* (which I reprinted in my notes, and which Mr. de Sélincourt has reprinted once more), and told me how he thought Keats meant to introduce into his poem the legend given in that extract.

Once more the photographer had to be commandeered to make me a voucher for the discovered couplets; and on this page you can see, stroke for stroke as nearly as we can do it, what Keats made of the legend, "written in smallest crow-quill size" in the margin of the manuscript which Bertha read on St. Mark's Eve.

There is Rossetti's legend, safe enough, though simplified for Keats's ends. But let the printer "transliterate" it for you in its final shape:—

"Gif ye wol stonden hardie wight—
Amiddes of the blacke night—
Righte in the churchè porch, pardie
Ye wol behold a companie
Appouchen thee full dolourouse
For sooth to sain from everich house
Be it in City or village
Wol come the Phantom and image
Of ilka gent and ilka carle
Whom coldè Deathè hath in parle
And wol some day that very year
Touchen with foulè venime spear

> And sadly do them all to die—
> Hem all shalt thou see verilie—
> And everichon shall by the [e] pass
> All who must die that year Alas."

There sure enough is the legend; and it does not suffer much by the sweeping provision that all whose phantoms went into the church were to die that year, instead of the partial arrangement of the usual version, according to which some of the phantoms were to come out again—in token that the sick folk whom they represented would recover. Neither do we miss much the wraiths of babies, who, being unable to walk, had to roll into church, according to *The Unseen World!**

The Eve of St. Mark, to which I have just added sixteen lines, was doubtless the poem which Keats told Fanny Brawne he had in his mind when he felt his early doom hanging over him, and barring the hope of life with her. "Whom the gods love die young," say we? Ah! Charles Kingsley was quite right; it is a "gruesome thing," this "premature interment." For Keats it meant love and art, both, cut down and withered. For us, his early death brought an infinity of loss. If it were but the lack of such a poem as this *Eve of St. Mark* was going to be, the loss is hard enough to measure. But, just as Keats, by passing into the unknown half a century sooner than he should have gone from the world in normal conditions, was spared many horrid things, so he was cut off from much which would have been assimilated to the enrichment of his mental background. The proposition is too obvious to need exhaustive treatment, even were this the place for it; but two edifices in the world of art have stood out conspicuously in my thought as I have been putting down these remarks. They are the works of Dickens and the pictures of Turner. Had Keats but lived as late as Landor, who was born long before him, his humour, his wit, his very speech must infallibly have taken a colour from Dickens, because, whether he would have read the books or not, he could not possibly have got away from the infiltration of Dickens into the common thought and speech of our daily life. How is it possible, for instance, to imagine Keats in 1870 looking in on James Rice, to sup on salmon provided by the latter, and not knowing "he wouldn't 'ave a cowcumber," or failing to give a return invitation to a "swarry" con-

From a drawing by Haydon. **John Keats.**

(Reproduced by the courtesy of Mr. H. Buxton Forman.)

* For the authenticity of the events described above, I refer the reader to Mr. Frank T. Sabin, at whose establishment in Shaftesbury Avenue (No. 118) they took place. I regret that circumstances did not admit of my appropriating to my own permanent use these gifts of the gods, whose steward, for the moment, Mr. Sabin happened to be. The manuscripts remain, with other interesting Keats material, in his possession, to pass in due course to someone wealthy enough to make himself their owner.

From a drawing by Paul Henry.
"'Love Isabel,' said he. 'I was in pain lest I should miss to bid thee a good-morrow.'"—"Isabella."
(Reproduced by kind permission of Mr. John Lane.)

From the painting by Miss I. L. Gloag. **Isabella.**
(Reproduced by the courtesy of the artist.)

sisting of "biled mutton and trimmins," or at least a meal of "chops and tomato sauce"? Dickens might not have affected Keats the poet; but he would have been good mental food for Keats the man and letter-writer, just as Fielding and Smollett were.

It is to Keats the poet, on the other hand, that Turner would have had a thousand things to say of the heavens and the earth and the waters, not under but about the earth, things but little akin to aught obtainable from Claude's Enchanted Castle—something of the significance of colour differing *toto cælo* from those coarse, huge canvasses covered by Keats's friend Haydon—"this glorious Haydon and all his creation," as the poet called the painter in his bright young enthusiasm in 1816. Keats, though born after Turner had begun exhibiting those more sober pictures which took so long to impress the public fully with the genius of the barber's son, was yet in his nonage when that early Dido and Æneas (on the morning of the chase) and the more classically poetic Dido Building Carthage were exhibited. The Decline of the Carthaginian Empire appeared the same year as Keats's first boyish book; it was not till Keats and Shelley had both been gathered young by the loving gods that the Bay of Baiæ, with Apollo and the Sibyl (1823) appeared at the Royal Academy; and only in 1828 and 1829, coevally with the first Shelley and Keats revival, did Dido Directing the Equipment of the Fleet and Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus follow. Had the poet-friends stepped together into the Academy exhibition of 1829, the sight of that picture in its fresh radiance of colours and its perfect blending of dramatic perception with a largeness of soul to feel the tragedy from the Cyclopean point of view, and express the whole in shapes and hues taken from nature and transfigured by the highest art, they must have been arrested by an enthusiastic astonishment. Their minds would have been opened to the meaning of the spiritual life of Turner still unfolding in its stupendous beauty when he had reached the age of fifty-three years; and the records of their own lives and their own labours would not have been silent as to Turner. What the effect on them would have been if they had lived to see how in Rain, Steam and Speed he could seize and set down at a blow the poetry possible to a view of industrialised England intersected by the iron roads which they knew not, or if they could have witnessed the great painter's last exhibited set of paintings in which he recurred to the most constant of his classical loves, who shall say? What background for the minds of Keats and Shelley those pictures, and many painted in the twenty-five or thirty years preceding them, would have furnished! They would have seen, in 1851, the whole bitter tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage told at last in four apocalyptic pictures—spilt, as it were, upon the canvas by some means that none can fathom—faded more or less now, and more or less damaged by neglect—hidden or scattered for years—but now, happily, summoned back to their native London, and shown together in the house that is called Tate's, on the Millbank side of Thames.

Well! well! "whom the gods love die young"; and perhaps such a revelation of poetry in colour might

have upset the ideals of those two poets; still, I cannot but think that, if the gentle gods had but made them a little more

"Drunk with the fury of their Will-to-be,"

they might have lived to see the last great poem of Turner, and followed him reverently to his grave in St. Paul's Cathedral—going to their respective homes—old men—with the knowledge that the supreme poet in colour had been "good health" to them for many years, and "filtered and fibred their blood." Shelley, indeed, had no very strong clutch upon life, if by life we mean personal existence in the world; he would have needed, when the squall swept his boat down in the Gulf of Spezia, a very powerful dose of the above-named fury of will-to-be before he made up his mind not to "go down with the other pigs" (the ballast), as he had declared he would in such an event. But Keats—how much of it would have been wanted to enable him to live down the insidious poison that was in him, and emerge victorious from the complex-conditioned struggle in which he perished? It is a bootless speculation; I drop it, and please myself by thinking of a scene in the Elysian Fields which has often come into my mind—a magic scene in which the Ariel spirit of Shelley, "lost in a soft amaze," beckons the staid and saddened ghost of Keats to watch the doings of Turner in that realm of those who are beloved of the gods, whether early diers or late diers.

"Come here, Keats! Look! see this queer little sturdy shade, how he is 'splashing' at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comets' hair!"

"What is that you're saying, Shelley? That is not in your works or mine or Byron's or Wordsworth's!"

"Oh no, that is from some of the new poetry they make down there now! But never mind; see how magically the podgy little old painter there slops his colours about; see how he takes up the gigantic *spatula* to deal with the solider masses of pigment and creates lights and shades undreamed of!"

"What's he muttering?" says Keats—

"'Four great walls in the new Jerusalem,
For Leonard, Rafael, Angelo, and ME
To cover.'

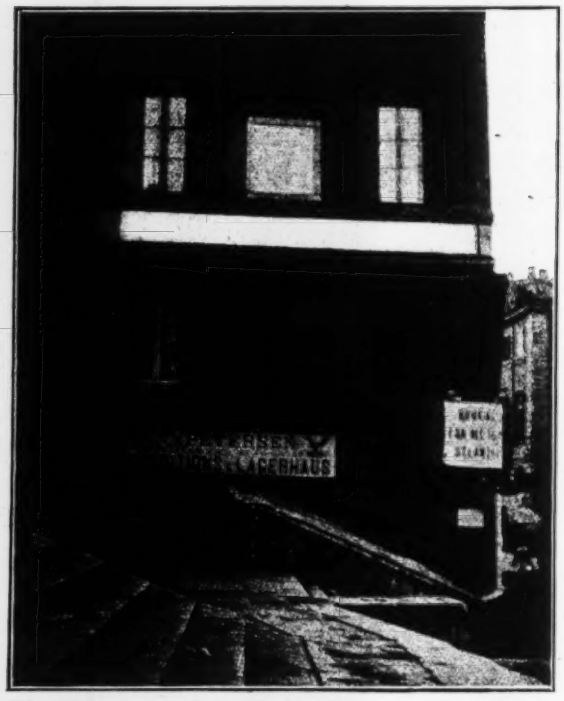
'I don't see any walls, but these ten leagues of canvas are big enough for me to do what I want.'"

"Whose poetry is he quoting, Shelley?"

"Oh, another new man, not so new as the last, though—Browning, the intellectual giant whom we welcomed to these Fields a few years ago—came after us—didn't learn so very much from us, but thought a lot of us both, and wrote about us. Never mind about him just now, Keats; look at the painter! See how the sky grows radiant on his canvas! see the clouds, the appari-

Photo F. Hollyer. **Endymion.**

From the painting by G. F. Watts, R.A.



The Frontage of the Poet's House at Rome, on the Piazza di Spagna.

From a photograph by Robert W. Hatswell.

tion of the little pink clouds shaping themselves like flocks of winged messengers of the gods, as he sweeps the floods of pigment before him! See the architecture of heaven—shapes of unimagined beauty, hues of unimagined glory—such a sky as none but I ever truly saw from the earthly atmosphere, because the others were not bold enough to fly where I flew!"

"What! none?—none of the Greeks?"

"Well! perhaps Aristophanes, Keats, for all his riotous laughter; but I doubt whether he saw such solemn and marvellous altitudes of sky as this man's."

"Let us ask him, Shelley. I saw him just now, steeplechasing over the clouds on that gigantic film-winged, horn-protected beetle he loves so."

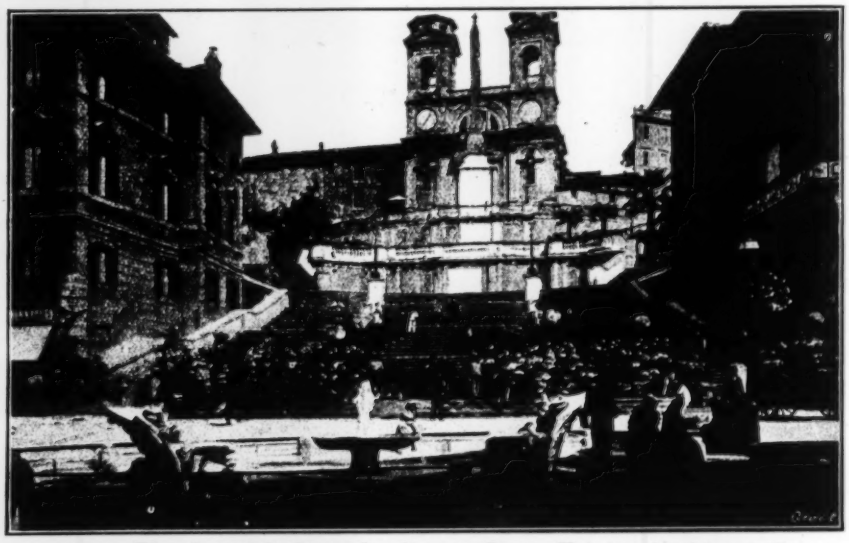
"No! no! look at the painter!—what wondrous reminiscences of legend and mythos he puts into the living clouds that his hand creates! And see, down in that corner of his canvas, how he bids woods and flowers to take new life—and plains of wheat and wonderful grasses and mosses and lichens, all full of the human spirit and yet true to nature! By Jove, Keats! he reminds me of you!"

"Ah! Shelley, he reminds me, in that particular corner, somewhat of Wordsworth; but he has more of the fire and fury of creation—and stronger wings. Oh! if I had but known him down there—instead of Haydon!"

THE KEATS—SHELLEY MEMORIAL AT ROME.

A LITTLE group of British and American literary men, admirers of the two English poets so inseparably connected in our minds with Rome, met in that city some three years ago to organise a movement to purchase by popular subscription the house on the Piazza di Spagna in which Keats died, and establish therein a permanent memorial of Keats and Shelley, consisting of a library of their works in various editions, portraits and manuscripts of the poets. The trustees of the memorial would also assist in protecting from future disturbance the graves of the poets and of their two companions, Severn and Trelawney, who are buried beside them in the beautiful cemetery outside the Porta San Paola.

It is to the honour of America that the idea of this memorial originated in the minds of her countrymen, and up to the present Americans from all parts have contributed most generously towards the furtherance of the scheme. The first great difficulties which beset the acquisition of the house have been surmounted, and the British and American Committees are able to announce that they have secured an option on the property, and they now trust to the generosity of all lovers of English poetry to enable them to complete the purchase and place the house beyond danger of destruction or absorption—as at one time threatened—into a big hotel. The time available for the completion of the purchase is necessarily limited, and the response must be prompt and generous if the work that has been done is not to be rendered vain.



The Spanish Steps leading to Santa Trinita dei Monti, Rome.

At the right hand side is the house in which Keats died, and on the wall is a tablet to the poet's memory.

Many a danger has threatened the house and the

graves of the poets in past years, and to preserve with proper honour two of the most sacred places of English literature is the main purpose of the present project. But apart from this, such a memorial is greatly needed; for in Rome—that goal of cultivated travellers and readers—a complete edition of Keats, for instance, is not to be bought. The Keats-Shelley Memorial will provide a place and facilities for a comprehensive study of both poets, and at the same time do honour to their genius and their influence. It is to be hoped that England, the birthplace of these two immortals, will not be behindhand in giving generous help to the scheme.

THE "BOOKMAN" PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

OCTOBER, 1906.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and the address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 15th of the month to

"The Prize Page," The Bookman, Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, Warwick Square, E.C. N.B.—Contributors are requested to note the change of address.

I.—A Prize of Half a Guinea is offered for the best quotation from Shakespeare applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of The Bookman. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

II.—A Prize of Three New Novels is offered for the best description of a farewell between two people from the works of any living novelist.

III.—A Prize of Half a Guinea is offered for the best list of novels descriptive of life, native or white, in our colonies and oreign possessions.

IV.—A copy of The Bookman will be sent *post free* or *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for The Bookman Prize Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

From a photograph kindly supplied by Mr. H. Buxton Forman.

Wentworth Place, afterwards Lawn Bank. Keats's House in Hampstead.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR SEPTEMBER.

I.—The Prize of Half a Guinea for the best Shakespeare quotation has been gained by A. Digeon, 66, Edith Road, West Kensington, W.

THE PACKERS AND THE PEOPLE. By J. Ogden Armour.

Who calls me villain?—*Hamlet*, ii. 2.

Other good quotations submitted were:—

PUNCH'S LIBRARY OF HUMOUR.

A tru ty villain, sir, that very oft,
When I am dull with care and melancho'y,
Lightens my humour with his merry jest.
Comedy of Errors, i, 2.

(J. Macpherson, 44, Langside Road, Glasgow.)

DRAKE: AN ENGLISH EPIC. By ALFRED NOYES.
The isle is full of Noyes's
Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.
Tempest, iii. 2, 144.
(M. B. KEMP, Queen Margaret Hall, Glasgow.)

MY DOG. By M. MAETERLINCK.
And thereby hangs a tale.
As You Like It, ii. 7, 28.
(J. ANDERSON, Golfview, Giffnock, N.B.)

MR. PUNCH'S LIBRARY OF HUMOUR.
He will pun these into shivers.
Troilus and Cressida, ii. 1, 42.
(M. L. MACLEOD, 19, Fonthill Terrace, Aberdeen.)

A BENEDICK IN ARCADY. By HALLIWELL SUTCLIFFE.
No more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me.
Hamlet, ii. 4.
(C. D. NEVILLE, 14, Woodland Road, Bristol.)

II.—THE PRIZE OF THREE NEW NOVELS for the three best poetical quotations defining "a gentleman" has been gained by L. WELBY, Maycroft, Shanklin, Isle of Wight.

I.

And indeed he seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal Knight,
'Who reverenced his conscience as his King;
Whose glory was redressing human wrong;
Who spake no slander; no, nor listened to it;
Who loved one only and who clave to her—'
. . . . . .
—And we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplished, wise,
With that sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly;
Not swaying to this faction or to that;
Not making his high place the lawless perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-ground
For pleasure; but thro' all this tract of years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless life.
Tennyson. "*Idylls of the King.*"

II.

He scarce had need to doff his pride or slough the dross of Earth—
E'en as he trod that day to God so walked he from his birth,
In simpleness and gentleness and honour and clean mirth.
So cup to lip in fellowship they gave him welcome high
And made him place at the banquet-board—the strong men ranged thereby,
Who had done his work and held his peace and had no fear to die.
Rudyard Kipling. "*To Wolcott Balestier.*"

III.

Sidney thirsting a humbler need to slake,
Nelson waiting his turn for the surgeon's hand,
Lucas crushed with chains for a comrade's sake,
Outram coveting right before command,
These were paladins, these were Craven's peers,
Those with him shall be crowned in story and song,
Crowned with the glitter of steel and the glimmer of tears,
Princes of courtesy, merciful, proud and strong.
Henry Newbolt. "*Craven.*"

We are glad to say that the number of competitors this month, not in one but in all the four sections, has greatly exceeded the best record we had yet attained. And the papers received in this and the following competition were gratifying, not only as regards their number, but for their high level of excellence.

Admirable quotations were submitted by Miss GRACE DURAND, Moulin Huet, Guernsey; Miss K. BUCKPETH, 53, England's Lane, N.W.; MRS. STIRLING, Fordel, Glenfarg; Miss WAINWRIGHT, 16, Atherton Road, Forest Gate, E.

III.—THE PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best motto for a book-plate chosen from an English author has been gained by Miss E. R. MITCHELL, St. Leonard's Cottage, St. John's, Bedford.

Be glad, thou reder, and thy sorwe of-caste,
Al open am I; passe in, and hy thee faste.
Chaucer. "*The Parlement of Foules*," 132.

Of many mottoes submitted we give the following:—

If you will not rise to us, we cannot stoop to you.—*Ruskin.*
The assembled souls of all that men held wise.—*Milton.*
Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.—*Steele.*
Laws die, Books never.—*Lytton.*
Choose an author as you choose a friend.—*Roscommon.*
On bokes for to rede I me delyte.—*Chaucer.*
All round my room my silent servants wait.—*Barry Cornwall.*

The foregoing quotations were submitted by Miss M. M. LILLEY, Knox's Church Manse, Arbroath; L. WELBY, Shanklin, Isle of Wight; E. S. RORISON, The Deanery, Perth; P. W. SWANTON, Brockton, Haslemere; J. MACPHERSON, 44, Langside Road, Glasgow; Miss J. BUTCHART, Armadale, Barrow-in-Furness; Miss M. GARDINER, King's House, Salisbury.

IV.—A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN for the best suggestions has been gained by Miss M. A. R. BAYNES, 37, Somerville Terrace, Sheffield, and L. WELBY, Maycroft, Shanklin, Isle of Wight.

THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.

Make the same use of a book that a bee does of a flower. She steals sweets from it, but does not injure it.—*Cotton.*

WILLIAM COWPER.

THERE are many writers besides Cowper whose claims to fame are obscured by accepted critical *formulæ*. Once a critical phrase has become established, whether it be a paradox, a platitude, or a falsehood, it will take generations of critics to uproot it. And even then you will find its seedlings sprouting everywhere, in text-books innumerable. Criticism, like history, repeats itself—in the sense that critics and historians are notoriously apt to repeat one another. The history of the eighteenth century is full of danger signals against this error of facile generalisation. That Shakespeare was ignored in the eighteenth century is a myth that still dies hard. That Cowper called back English poetry "from conventionality to nature" is an erroneous belief that still lives robustly. To contrast Cowper and Pope is misleading, if no notice is paid to what is the great glory of the period that intervenes between them—the flowering of English prose. This intermediate link is of paramount importance. The developments of prose and of poetry cannot be traced and described as separate and unrelated phenomena. The pointed brilliance of the antithetical Popian couplet had its influence on the prose style of Fielding as well as of Gibbon; and the prose style of the essayists and novelists had not a less influence on the so-called revolutionary poetry of William Cowper. Long before Cowper achieved fame as a poet, we find him "a sedulous ape" of the early eighteenth century essayists and novelists. And when, in "The Task," Cowper appears as a poetic revolutionary, going back to Milton for the form with which he was to dethrone the dynasty of Pope, it has to be remembered that Pope's so-called "tyranny" was at least as dead as Queen Anne, and that five years before Cowper was born a great painter of nature had arisen in James Thomson, the author of "The Seasons." "Cowper, the herald of Wordsworth, may perhaps be described as a reformer of poetry, but it is more significant of his historical position to describe him as an essayist in verse."

William Cowper, one of the most interesting, most attractive, and most ill-starred figures in all our literature, was born in 1731, the son of the rector of Great Berkhampstead. At the age of six he lost his mother, whom more than fifty years later he celebrated in touching and immortal verse.

"My mother! when I learnt that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss:
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss."

From a painting by Sir J. E. Millais.

Isabella and Lorenzo.

From a painting by Waster Crane.

Rischgitz Collection.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci.

After an unhappy experience in a private school, Cowper, at the age of ten, entered Westminster, where he made the friendship of Warren Hastings, George Colman, and the future poet, Churchill. On leaving school he was articled to a solicitor, having, as a fellow-clerk, Thurlow, the future Lord Chancellor. Then followed ten idle years at the Bar, mainly spent, in his own words, in "giggling and making giggle" with his cousins, with one of whom, Theodora Cowper, he fell in love. But these years were not quite unproductive of literary work. The likelihood is that Cowper wrote much at this time beyond the few verses we know of, and the handful of essays which he contributed to Colman and Thornton's *Connoisseur*—the most brilliant of the later imitations of the *Spectator*. The latter are of importance in the history of Cowper, for they show us the first manifestation of that charming lightness of touch and playful humour which make Cowper's Letters one of the two or three choice monuments in our epistolary literature. Indeed, for unlaboured ease and charm, Cowper's letters stand first in the language.

In his thirty-second year the blow descended from which Cowper never recovered. The terror of a public examination, for a post into which family influence would have jockeyed him, unhinged his mind. The remainder of his life, which covered thirty-seven years, and includes all his great poetic achievement, was like the sky of a summer evening, the tranquil calm of which was beset from time to time by the thunder-clouds of madness. In 1765 Cowper took up his residence as a boarder with the Unwins at Huntingdon, and thus began a friendship with Mary Unwin that ceased only with her death, four years before his own. The tender relationship between the afflicted poet and this second mother, nurse and friend, is a subject almost too delicate for any prose. It is best left described in the poet's own lovely lyric, "To Mary"—wherein an almost filial love, a haunting melancholy, and a passionate devotion and gratitude are blended into imperishable verse.

It was Mary Unwin who not only restored the sunshine to his life, but found for him what were to be the abiding interests of his life—poetry and nature-study. Cowper's spirit was indeed broken beyond restore, and it is pathetic to think of the gay Templar, the associate of Colman and the wits, settling quietly and resignedly down to a life which knew no more tumultuous joys than tea and talk and the playful tricks of his tame hares. It was Mary Unwin's gentle magic that effected this miracle and salvaged from the ship-wrecked mind a precious load of golden ore. Other influences there were, but hers was the best and most healing, and without it the rest would have been as naught. For twelve years Cowper was powerfully influenced by John Newton, the famous curate of Olney, a converted slave-trader, whose zeal outran the limits of the poet's strength. The literary result of this influence is to be found in Cowper's sixty-eight contributions to the "Olney Hymns." A happier influence was that which came to Cowper in 1781, two years after Newton had left Olney, by the advent to his little circle of Lady Austen. She brought back to the poet something of his early gaiety of spirit, and the influence is enshrined for ever in "The Task" and "John Gilpin," and in the Letters. The chief labour of his later years was the translation of Homer, undertaken under the inspiration of Lady Hesketh, one of the cousins of the early "giggling" days. It was a subject uncongenial to Cowper's genius, and the roll of the Homeric battle-drum is transmuted into a nerveless tinkle. And yet Cowper was capable of infusing his verse with the passion of patriotism. Our island verse has never produced a clearer trumpet call than

> "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still";

nor in all our literature is there a more perfect threnody than the noble lines on "The Loss of the Royal George." The latter is magical in its simplicity: the effect is tremendous, and the cause is a few monosyllables put together by a skilled craftsman in a moment of inspiration.

In 1791 Mrs. Unwin's health began to fail, and the few remaining years of Cowper's life were full of vicissitude and anxiety. After her death, in 1796, the malady which blighted his life became his blessing. He heard of her death without emotion. His mind did not survive her, though he lived a few months into the new century of whose literature he was a brilliant herald. RANGER.

Some suggested texts and reference books:—

Task and Minor Poems. Ed. by Elizabeth Lee. 2s. 6d. (Blackwood.)

Cowper. By Mrs. Oliphant. (E. M. L.) 2s. (Macmillan.)

Eighteenth Century Literature. By E. Gosse. 6s. (Macmillan.)

Literature of the Georgian Era. By W. Minto. 6s. (Blackwood.)

New Books.

MRS. CRAIGIE'S FAREWELL.*

There is always a touch of pathos and irony in the circumstances when an author's last book appears just in time to be laid on the coffin. No sermon *de vanitate mundi* could be more impressive. And yet the book may live its hour, its day, while the genius that traced its lines has gone—whither? Surely not into the gulf of sheer oblivion! This delicate strong spirit, eager, keen, quick-sighted, humorous, witty, winning much wonder and no little love from the wide English world, is taken at thirty-nine by a sudden stroke, and we feel how it could have done far greater things than plays and novels, uncommon as they were. The tribute of regret for a career stopped in mid-course, which not only London, but England as well as America, joined in offering, was the highest praise. Happily, we need not temper its warmth by deprecating severe judgments on the story, which now comes with an *Ave et vale*, to bid the reader farewell. "The Dream and the Business" overflows with vivacity. If there is not any startling or even sustained action, there are men and women truly drawn; thoughts, passions, drops of life are scattered on every page. And we who read after the event seem to catch a foreboding of it, in Lady Marlesford's weakness of heart and early passing away.

John Oliver Hobbes—the quaint pseudonym has a touch of American humour—illustrates the miracle which sometimes happens, of roses growing upon the gnarled old Puritan stock. "The Dream and the Business," which sums up in an epigram all the Puritan did and all he thought about, his one great care no less than his Sabbath meditations, will serve also as a title under which to rehearse the qualities in writing of Pearl Mary Teresa Craigie. She had the bright light touch that we call Parisian; but in her it meant a certain shyness; not frivolity, but self-defence; and beneath it glowed a spiritual fire, fed by dreams or ideas from another than the world of fashion. Though a dweller in Cosmopolis, her free soul escaped when it chose, and she speaks of idle things and idler people with a foreign accent. If her name "Pearl" comes out of Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," those which she added to it, of "Mary Teresa," belong to "The School for Saints." Deep religious experience she held to be the truest truth, more enlightening than the *savoir vivre* which men and women of the world prize, closer to reality than modern knowledge. She is always practising on this chord. Puritan or Catholic, she returns to it from the stage and the drawing-room. In her final effort she brings together all the types which occupied her fancy. They do not coalesce into a drama where the closing scene resolves the first entanglement; but each has its value, and will bear the light of criticism.

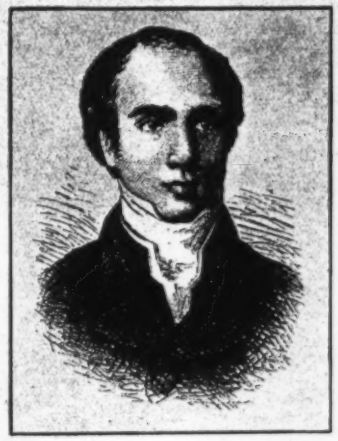
I suppose Jim Firmalden is the central figure, round about whom the rest are grouped. The Presbyterian household in Bayswater, to which this masterful young man brings the latest liberal and progressive thought, is delightfully sketched. His sister, Sophy, falls in love with Maurice Lessard, the wonderful operatic artist, whose creed has only

* "The Dream and the Business." By John Oliver Hobbes. 6s. (T. Fisher Unwin.)

John Keats.
From a portrait in chalk by William Hilton, R.A.

Haydon's Life-Mask of Keats.
From a hitherto unpublished oil-painting by the poet's nephew in the possession of M. H. Buxton Forman.

Keats on his Death-bed.
Painted by Severn, 1821.



George Keats, Brother of the Poet.

Keats.
Sketched by Haydon for a figure in his painting of "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem."

Thomas Keats, Brother of the Poet.

Bertha Reading the Legend of St. Mark.

Mary Tighe.
Who is alluded to in some of Keats's early poems.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci.

one article, viz., "Pleasure is pleasant"; and we may imagine the complications that follow. Lessard, as mere painting, just and not over-coloured, remains among the characters invented by Mrs. Craigie as one of the most telling. It is a peculiarity in the story, not often found elsewhere, that Jim and Sophy share in each other's confidences all through. The unlucky Jim has pledged himself also to one-who cultivates art—music-hall art—and the vulgar Nannie Cloots gets up her own small sordid tragedy, as the mischief-maker of the book, with a skill derived from penny novelettes and the real genius of the London *gamine*. She is handled not unkindly, in spite of her provoking nature and the harm she does. But Firmalden's "ordeal"—to quote Meredith—comes on him from a different quarter. He is the brave advancing Presbyterian leader, who can interest Mr. Gladstone and control great audiences, but who meets his temptation, subtle and apparently innocent, when Tessa Lady Marlesford crosses his path.

Tessa is a Catholic, is married, is a convent-girl turned occasional free-thinker, and without quite meaning it, is to the last degree selfish. Her excellent husband cannot read this young lady's heart. They are incompatibles. America, indulgent to human frailties, would have divorced them on that simple ground. Divorce, too, is a strain in Lessard's destiny; but to the anarchic that signifies little. The Marlesfords cannot undo their marriage in this easy fashion. They drift, however, upon dangerous currents; the man finds a friend in Sophy, the woman more or less compromises her brother Jim. Then, it may be said, the story breaks off. We come to an end, not to a solution. Lessard follows after his Epicurean instincts, and glorifies the dead Tessa in music when he could not lead her astray in life. Firmalden renounces marriage; and Sophy, after years, accepts Lord Marlesford. "The Catholic ideal of marriage," says Lessard, between admiration and scorn, "is magnificent, poetical, mystic, sublime; but it is not domesticity." It involves self-sacrifice, sometimes to an heroic extent. And this may be the lesson which John Oliver Hobbes had chiefly in view. The New England Puritan will not learn it; the artist who paints at Barbizon, or sings his melting airs on the stage from Vienna to New York, will frankly call it impossible. Not so the dreamer who believed in this actual present world of ours as a "School for Saints." Her last word would then prove to be her best. For all great and beautiful things demand this heroism. WILLIAM BARRY.

FROM LIBAU TO TSUSHIMA.*

This book is one of the most interesting, and at the same time the most painful, yet published on the voyage of Rozhdestvensky's fleet from Europe to the China Sea. It is interesting because it describes the *vie intime* on board the *Suvarov*. It is painful because it discloses a state of almost abject fear from the date on which the ships left Libau till they came into action with their enemy. If the record may be taken as typical, it is to be wondered that the Russian ships ever reached their destination, while it explains fully why they were beaten as soon as they met the Japanese. Even in the Baltic attack was constantly expected. Thus when at anchor off Bornholm, the author states, there would be danger. "We shall sleep in our clothes all night. We shall pass through a narrow Strait. We are afraid of striking on the Japanese mines in these waters. Perhaps there will be no mines; but considering that long ago Japanese officers went to Sweden and, it is said, swore to destroy our fleet, we must be on our guard. This Strait is eminently suitable for torpedo-boat attacks, or for laying down mines. When you get this letter we shall have passed the place, and it is no use your worrying yourself about it." Although Mr. Politovsky advises his wife not to worry, he did not cease to worry himself, in common, apparently, with the leaders of the fleet, judging from the elaborate arrangements made to bring the latter from the Baltic to the North Sea. "Each division is surrounded by torpedo-boats. Whenever a steamer or sailing ship is observed coming towards us a torpedo-boat goes ahead and clears the way." Again, "a Swedish steamer approached the fleet, flying a signal that she had very important despatches." It is reported "that a very suspicious three-masted sailing ship has sailed from the Fiords. The order has now been given to train all guns on every passing vessel." Not only were the Japanese suspected of endeavouring to catch up the steam fleet in sailing vessels, but they were even supposed to have pressed balloons into their service! One of the ships signalled that they had seen two. "What can this be? can it be the Japanese? . . . Panic prevails on board, . . . the slightest suspicious-looking spot in the water is carefully watched. The guns are loaded. The crew are standing about on deck. One half will sleep at their guns without undressing; the other half, and officers, will keep watch to-night. It is curious that we are so far from the theatre of war, and yet are so much alarmed." This was as the fleet was entering the North Sea. It certainly was *very* curious.

On October 8th-21st, he writes: "What a night it has been—nerve-racking and restless. Early in the evening all were in a state of nervous tension and panic. News was received at midnight from the foremost ships that they had observed four suspicious torpedo-boats without lights. Vigilance was redoubled, but thank God, the night passed happily." At 9 p.m. on the same date, the author records: "A signal has been received (by wireless telegraphy) that the *Kamchatka*, which had dropped far astern, was attacked by torpedo-boats." . . . "At 10 p.m. the *Kamchatka* reports that she is attacked on all sides by eight torpedo-boats." On the night of October 9th-22nd the crew of the *Kamchatka* had evidently not recovered their nerves, for she was asking for the position of the fleet, as she had altered her course, and the torpedo-boats had gone. Mr. Politovsky does not give any record of the number of torpedoes fired from these wicked boats, nor does he say whether any of the heroes on the *Kamchatka* lost the number of their mess. He trusts the wind will not continue to freshen, for then, he says, "the torpedo-boats will be obliged to give up following" the fleet, and, as he puts it, "My God, what will the fleet do then?"

Our readers will remember that the night of the 9th-22nd was the one on which the gallant attack was made on the English fishing-boats. Let our author describe the scene himself: "About 1 a.m. they sounded to quarters, having seen ships ahead; they let the ships get nearer and then began . . . what it was words fail to describe. The ships of our division were ablaze. The noise of the firing was incessant. The searchlights were turned on. I was on the after-bridge, and was perfectly blinded and deafened by the fire. I put my hands to my ears and bolted below." He, however, continued to watch the battle from the vantage-point of the accommodation-ladder port, and this is what he saw: "A small steamer was rolling helplessly on the sea; one funnel, a bridge, and the red and black paint on the side, were clearly visible. I saw no one on deck—they had probably hidden themselves below in terror. First one and then another projectile from our ship struck this unfortunate steamer. I saw there was an explosion. The order to cease firing was given, but the other ships continued to fire, and no doubt sank the steamer. A second and third steamer, not having anyone on deck, rolled helplessly in the same fashion. The *Suvarov* did not fire on them." Magnanimous *Suvarov!* cool-headed and gallant officers!! We wonder why the fleet did not turn aside and ram every fishing-smack. The possible explanation is that they were too frightened to do so, or could not trust their manœuvring capacity. It may be remarked that Mr. Politovsky states that about the time they left Kronstadt "the captain of the *Asia* momentarily lost his head and tried to ram the *Apraxin*. The presence of mind of the officer of the watch saved the *Asia* and the *Apraxin* from damage." It is a pity that the officer in question was not placed in charge of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's fleet; if he could have been divided up into portions, and a bit of him put in every ship, it might have saved the Russians considerable mental worry, perhaps, too, have spared the lives of several unfortunate Englishmen, and possibly have brought the fleet to Tsushima in a better state of fighting efficiency than it possessed when it got there. We need hardly say that the fishermen were in the wrong. "They saw the fleet. Why did they not cut adrift their nets, if they had them out, and get out of the way? The nets could have been paid for afterwards." A fair reply to this is that, in the first place, the fishing fleet was doing what it was perfectly entitled to do; in the second, that anybody who knows the Russians must be perfectly well aware that had the fishermen cast loose their

* "From Libau to Tsushima." By E. S. Politovsky, Engineer-in-Chief. Translated from the Russian by Major F. R. Godfrey, R.M.L.I. 6s. (John Murray.)

"Since Ariadne was a Vintager."—"Endymion."
From a drawing by R. Anning Bell.
(Reproduced from "The Poems of John Keats," by kind permission of Messrs. Geo. Bell and Sons.)

"While her robe flaunted with the daffodils."—"Lamia."
From a drawing by R. Anning Bell.
(Reproduced from "The Poems of John Keats," by kind permission of Messrs. Geo. Bell and Sons.)

Isabella, or The Pot of Basil.
From the painting by Holman Hunt.
Rischgitz Collection.

Endymion.
From a drawing by Sir Edward Poynter.
(Reproduced by the courtesy of the artist.)

nets the only way to have got the price of them would have been at the cannon's mouth.

However, the situation was quite clear in the fleet. It was not the *Kamchatka* which had asked the position of the fleet, but the Japanese, and they had found out now where it was. "If that is the case, we must expect to be attacked to-night." Terrible prospect, enough to daunt the bravest hearts! "The moon is shining now, but from four to six a.m. it will be dark, the time most suitable for attack." The only consoling incident, from the English point of view, is the signal from the *Aurora*—four under-water shot-holes, funnel torn, the chaplain severely wounded, and a captain of a gun slightly. The author says, and we agree with him, "The only consolation is that our shooting is so good."

The wickedness of the English is more than once alluded to. When the fleet was not allowed to coal at Vigo the hand of the English was visible in it. The English fleet is said to have shadowed the Russians and to have formed in battle order. "Horrid folk! they are Russia's eternal enemy. They are cunning, powerful at sea, and insolent everywhere." . . . "If you could only hear how the Spaniards abuse the English; they shake their fists and nearly foam at the mouth." A truly terrifying aspect. "If they only could they would play some low trick on them." Speaking of low tricks, it may be remarked that the *Anadir's* anchor fouled the telegraph cable at Tangier, and the admiral "ordered the cable to be cut." "It is lucky," says the author, "that the cable belonged to France. Had it been English, the scandal would have been terrific." To prevent the *Oslyabya* coaling at Tangier, for which purpose she asked for a barge and baskets from Gibraltar, we are told that the English purposely employed all the barges and bought up all the baskets! We trust the lynx-eyed Treasury will note this statement. If so, they will probably send out at considerable expense a Treasury expedition to Gibraltar to ascertain the truth of it, and if veracious (we take leave to doubt it), surcharge the officers concerned with the price of the baskets.

However, notwithstanding the machinations of perfidious Albion, and the desperate efforts which the Japanese did not make to stop the Russian fleet on the voyage to Vladivostok, the fleet eventually reached Tsushima. Here the unfortunate author, who seems to have been more at home with the duties of a peaceful naval constructor than as an engineer on board the fighting fleet, met his end, being drowned like a rat in the *Suvarov* when she went down. His unfortunate wife, who must have all our sympathies, states that those below were not called. "There was no need of them. They saved the 'valuable' life of Admiral Rozhdestvensky." She has thought fit to publish the letters which her husband wrote to her, and they certainly form a most remarkable revelation of the state of affairs in the Russian fleet. Major Godfrey is to be congratulated on having made what is plainly an excellent translation of the documents submitted to him.

Walter H. James.

A SCOTTISH POET.*

Mrs. Browning used to wonder why a certain Scotch poet of her period went into so many editions. One often wonders, on the contrary, why Dr. Smith's verses are not better known, on the south side of the Border at any rate. The wonder is accompanied with regret. But perhaps this cheaper re-issue of his collected works may win new friends for him among circles where the verse of a keen, unobtrusive, and gracious spirit is welcome. The volume shows various manners, but no mannerisms. Dr. Smith's best work is unforced, and it is done usually in the form of dramatic monologue. He writes most easily and successfully as the interpreter of some social or religious phase, seen through the play of one character upon others, especially during the eddying latter half of the nineteenth century. This holds true, although his first success was "The Bishop's Walk," a sympathetic study of Archbishop Leighton, while his latest verse consists of ballads from Scottish history. These are introduced by lines in which the author gives the standpoint of his own mind:

> "We shall err from the truth if we keep
> Just to old Party lines,
> And stir up old hatreds that sleep
> In the books of Divines,
> And rulings of Lawyers, and tales
> That haunt the dim hills and dales."

That is a word mightily needed in modern Scotland, and it is characteristic of the writer. Dr. Smith is essentially catholic. His studies of the Scottish clergy include evangelists, episcopal priests, Jesuits, and Presbyterian ministers, and all are done with a pleasant blend of incisiveness and sympathy. "Raban," for example, is a fit companion in verse to the prose of "The Scottish Probationer"; both are classical transcripts of a special phase. And Praed himself could hardly have etched more neatly the character of Miss Penelope Leith, or of Lady Anne Dewhurst, or of Rev. Dr. Boyack. Of the latter Dr. Smith writes:

> "Easy-natured and kindly he,
> Respectable always in everything;
> Nothing he did but it had the ring
> Of cultured mediocrity;
> In talents, in morals, in learned lore
> Respectable ever, and nothing more.
> No special mission had he to preach;
> No special faculty his to teach;
> Nor special power of the priestly art
> Or to console, or move the heart;
> There seemed no reason why he should be
> God's servant there in the parish kirk,
> Instead of dealing out tape or tea,
> Or driving the plough from morn to mirk,
> Save that he read some Latin or Greek,
> And wrote good words that were smooth and weak."

The same catholic spirit glimmers through the author's studies of religious temperament. It is specially manifest in his verses on the Larger Hope, one of many traits which he has in common with George Macdonald. Dr. Smith is more shrewd and far less fanciful than his brother poet. He has less vision and more blood in his verse. But both interpret lovingly the peasantry and middle classes of Scotland in last century; both are merciless on fashionable orthodoxy; and both have celebrated Aberdeen University, which is surely the most favoured of all the Scottish colleges in the number of her poets.

> "There's an old university town
> Between the Don and the Dee
> Looking over the grey sand dunes,
> Looking out on the cold North Sea.
> Breezy and blue the waters be,
> And rarely there you shall fail to find
> The white horse-tails lashing out in the wind,
> Or the mists from the land of ice and snow
> Creeping over them chill and slow."

"Borland Hall," which opens with these lines, is in some ways Dr. Smith's most characteristic larger production. It is less satirical than "Olrig Grange," which has been his most popular poem, but its passion, character-sketches, and lyrics are quite as fine as anything he has done, even in "Hilda" or "Kildrostan." It is in "Borland Hall," for example, where one lights on the song which, to the present writer at least, seems one of Dr. Smith's daintiest pieces:

> "So she went drifting, drifting
> Over the sea,
> Thinking that others were shifting;
> Surely not she.
> She no anchor had lifted,
> Meant not to move;
> Only she slowly drifted
> Deep into love.
>
> Oh, she had held that a maiden
> Should not be first
> To sigh with a heart love-laden,
> And long and thirst;
> And mad at herself for her longing,
> Hard things she said,
> Then was mad at herself for wronging
> The love she had. . . .
>
> So she went drifting, drifting
> Day after day;
> So he went shifting, shifting
> Farther away;
> Oh but a word would have done it—
> Word never spoken;
> So she went drifting, drifting
> With her heart broken."

That illustrates the defects of technique which occasionally mar the author's verse. But it shows the singer, just as the larger dramatic poems reveal the penetration of one who

* "The Poetical Works of Walter C. Smith, D.D., LL.D." Collected Edition, revised by the author. 4s. 6d. net. (Andrew Melrose.)

is alive to the popular foibles and currents of his age, and who writes of them in pleasant verse.

Some of us will not give up our row of the original blue and brown editions even for this comely volume. It is complete, indeed. But, old associations apart, it omits the characteristic little preface to "Thoughts and Fancies for Sunday Evenings," in one of whose sentences Dr. Smith wrote: "In Scotland we have no Christian year of fasts and feasts and saints' days. But we have, like other countries, our fifty-two Sundays, which would serve us well enough if they were used to better purpose." The present convenient and inexpensive reprint will help to introduce a new generation to the verses of one who has provided reading for more than the Sundays of modern existence. He is too rich in human interest to be described as a Scottish Keble, too religious to be called a Scottish Praed, even were such attempts at classification serviceable. In fact, one almost hesitates to underline the religious qualities and interests of his work, lest some intending readers should allow themselves to be prejudiced against it on that score. If they do, they will overlook the output of a writer who not only reflects, but has reflected wisely on, several of the humorous and tragic aspects of contemporary life. It is an output which cannot be charged with pettiness or ambition, and the discerning will be the first to appreciate what that counts for in a minor poet.

James Moffatt.

A CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.*

Dr. Briggs, of Union Seminary, with the aid of his accomplished daughter, has completed and issued the first volume of a commentary on the Psalter, which is likely for some time to hold its place as at once the fullest and the most authoritative we possess on this book of Scripture. It enhances the value of the "International Critical Commentary," to which it is a contribution, and it will also add to the already great reputation of its author, himself one of the editors of the series. The present volume contains an elaborate introduction to the Psalter, along with a commentary on the first fifty Psalms.

The commentary follows the excellent plan adopted in the other volumes of the series devoted to the books of the Old Testament. It prints in small type, and in separate paragraphs, all remarks upon language and text, so that the book may be used with comfort and edification by those who are ignorant of Hebrew. The contents of each Psalm are lucidly given, then follows a translation, printed so as to represent the poetical form of the original; remarks upon the substance and meaning are next introduced, and lastly, notes upon the language. All of this is accomplished in a fashion that leaves little to be desired. A perfect translation, giving both the very meaning and the poetical colouring of the original, is probably unattainable. The attempt to render the Psalms poetically has failed, even when made by translators who themselves were poets. Accuracy and life are perhaps as much as we should demand, and these we have in this volume. Dr. Briggs will be the last to expect that all his interpretations will be accepted; but it must in justice be said that his commentary, though bare enough and too strictly "critical and exegetical" to satisfy the wants of some readers of the Psalms, fully justifies his statement that "this commentary is the fruit of forty years of labour."

The Introduction is full of good matter. It treats of four subjects: The Text, Higher Criticism, Canonicity, and Interpretation. Under the first head a full account is given of the versions and manuscripts of the Psalms—an account which leaves the impression that it is impossible to be quite sure of the original text, and that much must be determined by internal evidence and the good sense of editors. One of the aids to textual criticism is the poetical form of the Psalms. To the devotional reader of the Psalms it may seem of mighty little consequence whether the words before him form a pentameter tristich or a trimeter tetrastich; he may even resent the intrusion of profane technicalities into so sacred a region. But not only is it interesting to trace the forms into which Hebrew poetry run, but an understanding of these forms is essential both to the criticism and the interpretation of the Psalms.

The Higher Criticism, as applied to the Psalter, has gradually reached the conclusion that the final editing of the book could not have been earlier than the Maccabean period, and that David wrote few, if any, of the Psalms, the most of them being post-exilic. It is mainly by the internal evidence found in the contents of the Psalms themselves that this conclusion has been reached; for, as Dr. Briggs shows, the titles now printed in our Bibles were not attached to the original Psalms. That so many were ascribed to David, "the traditional father of religious poetry and of the temple worship," was natural. And in the New Testament "David" is used very much as an equivalent for the "Psalter." So that our Lord's ascription of this or that Psalm to David was made without raising the question whether David was its actual author or not. "There was no reason why Jesus as a teacher should have come to any other opinion on this subject than His contemporaries."

The account which Dr. Briggs gives of the evolution of the Psalter is highly instructive. "The Psalter represents many centuries of growth in the historical origin both of its Psalms, extending from the time of David to the Maccabean period, and of the various minor and major Psalters through which they passed, from the early Persian to the late Greek period, before the present Psalter was finally edited and arranged, in the middle of the second century B.C." But probably the feature of the Introduction which will attract most general interest is the defence of the imprecatory Psalms. Having shown that "no one knows what love is, who cannot truly hate," and that it is "a weak and sickly individualism which shuts its eyes against the wrath of God . . . against evil and incorrigible sin," Dr. Briggs goes on to detail the historical situations which evoked the strong language of many of the Psalms, and concludes that "all the imprecations of the Psalms are upon just such treacherous hypocrites, traitors, and bloodthirsty enemies of the kingdom of God, as Jesus Himself pronounces imprecations upon, who aim at nothing else than the wilful destruction of the true religion. It is the form and general character of these imprecations which are most obnoxious to the modern mind, especially the physical sufferings that are invoked, the dishonouring of wives and daughters, and the slaughter of babes, even of the unborn. This is from the point of view of the solidarity of interest in the family, tribe, and nation, and especially from the ancient principle of the duty of revenge, which was inherited by sons and kinsmen; so that the only way to avoid future peril of revenge was the extermination of all who would be likely in the future to undertake it." But after all explanations, it remains true that the spirit underlying some, if not all, of the imprecations in the Psalms is very different from the spirit in which our Lord's warnings, threatenings, and invectives were uttered.

As regards the form of the volume, we have but one suggestion to make. Might not the publishers profitably consider whether the use of abbreviations is not overdone?

Marcus Dods.

* "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms." By Charles Augustus Briggs, D.D., D.Litt., Professor of Theological Encyclopædia and Symbolics, Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Emilie Grace Briggs, B.D. In two volumes. Vol. I. 10s. 6d. (T. and T. Clark.)

THE PEASANTS' REVOLT.*

Professor Oman's monograph on the Peasants' Great Revolt of 1381 will be warmly welcomed by all historical students. No event, with the exception of the Black Death, in the fourteenth century English history more fully needs critical examination and the illuminating patience of modern research. And the opportunity for rewriting the whole history of the Rebellion has been gradually furnished by the labours of other writers in the field. Mr. Trevelyan's study in his "England in the Age of Wycliffe," the same writer's previous publication in the English Historical Review of the French, that of a new and important authority, the "Anonimal Chronicle of St. Mary's, York," the monograph of Mr. Powell on the "Rising in East Anglia," the documents edited in a separate collection by Mr. Powell and Mr. Trevelyan, and the elaborate documents transcribed by the late M. Réville from his researches at the Record Office (edited for the Société de l'Ecole des Chartes, with a preface by M. Petit-Dutaillis), together with M. Réville's three

* "The Great Revolt of 1381." By Charles Oman. 8s. 6d. net. (The Clarendon Press.)

chapters on the risings in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Hertfordshire, provide ample material for collation and inquiry. Professor Oman modestly states that had Réville lived to complete his history of the great Revolt, "this book of mine would not have been written," and no one but sincerely regrets the loss of a brilliant French worker at the premature age of twenty-seven, but it is fair to point out that the Chichele Professor has not been content merely to work from the elaborate transcripts placed at his disposal; he has supplemented the sources by researches of his own, notably, into the Polz-tax documents, and the student will find not only two helpful maps in the appendices, but some important and new material which throws most valuable light on the causes and character of the upheaval.

The story is written with the ease and brilliance which Professor Oman has taught us to expect from his practised and versatile pen; and the narrative carries the reader, after some preliminary preparation, from the launching of the unhappy Polz-tax in the winter of 1380-1, to the quenching of the rebellion in the eastern counties, concluding with a brief survey of the "squalid and obscure municipal quarrels" at York, only indirectly connected with the great rising itself. The narrative portion adds little to our knowledge, for with the exception of an important difference of view as regards the conduct of the king at the conference with the rebels at Mile End, the writer, on the whole, save in minor details, follows results already established. Mr. Trevelyan had regarded Richard at Mile End as willing to sacrifice the unpopular Ministers, Sudbury and Hales, whose blood was demanded by the insurgents. Professor Oman prefers to interpret the king as replying "in a temporising fashion," and thereby exonerates him from the moral responsibility for their deaths, which, indeed, as events showed, he was powerless to prevent. And certainly this view seems to fit with more psychological aptness into the decision and courage of the royal lad subsequently shown at Smithfield.

When we come to the more general part of the subject—the causes, extent, and result of the rising—Professor Oman's chief results may be broadly summarised in four interesting conclusions. While he holds very strongly that the Polz-tax, for reasons which he discusses at length, was the occasion of the revolt, he holds equally strongly that it was neither the main nor the sole cause. For this we must look to the general economic and political position, to a combination of political and social grievances, intensified by the Black Death, the foreign and domestic policy of England, and the working out of the agrarian evolution; and these made the peasantry, in particular, ripe for rebellion. Secondly, he argues for eliminating from the multiplicity of motives in operation the preaching of the Lollards. "It does not seem that Wycliffe's recent attack on the Pope, the Friars, and the 'Cæsarean clergy' had any appreciable influence on the origin or course of the rebellion." And the argument in favour of this is close and convincing, even if it scarcely does full justice to the effect of Wycliffe's general attack on ecclesiastical property. Thirdly, he contends that all the evidence available disposes of the theory of a deliberately organised and concerted general rising. The insurrection was, in fact, essentially "sporadic." The diversity of causes, and of the character of the various troubles, the dates at which they respectively took place, the absence of evidence to show connection between the ring-leaders and of definite and prepared plans, and the wide differences in the motives and objects, which varied with the local circumstances, alike forbid such a hypothesis, and point, indeed, to a contradictory inference. An organised general rising necessarily implies simultaneity of effect—a central directing brain, or a central directing committee. Research has failed to find either the one or the other. Fourthly, he argues that the broad results on the land system have been exaggerated. The Rebellion of 1381, in brief, did not secure "the practical extinction of villeinage." And here, in company with the later workers, Professor Oman contests conclusions, resting on the high authority of Stubbs and Thorold Rogers.

These main propositions garnered from this fascinating study will invite discussion, above all, from the economic experts. Apart from their value, there can be little doubt that the mass of figures dealing with the imposition and incidence of the new Polz-tax, the widespread fraudulent attempt to evade it by "cooked figures," and the counter-attempt of the Government to revise the returns, which fanned the embers of discontent into a flame, are an important contribution to our knowledge, not merely of the rising of 1381. The elaborate statistics arrayed in the appendices suggest at once two inferences. If there was no concert in the rebellion between different centres, there was a remarkable unanimity as to the methods—the onus of "finding the woman" to be placed on the Government—by which the taxpayers sought to evade the hateful tax. "The preposterous suppression of females," and the innocent suggestion that inhabitants who ought to have been returned had perhaps "taken to the woods" seems to have been universal. This is only human nature, and does not prove that there was any widespread collusion. The income-tax collectors to-day doubtless find that the principles of evasion are similarly simple and common. And secondly, they confirm the historian's healthy scepticism as to the value of figures supplied by the medieval chronicler. Green's retort to Freeman that a monkish scribe had only to tell a lie often enough, and with sufficient emphasis, and at last he would get a historical swell to believe him, is no longer applicable. The Record Office workers have changed all that. For example, the "Villa Oxon," in the L.T.R. Enrolled Accounts, returns for 1377, 2,357, and for 1381, 2,005, and this was the town which we have been asked to believe supported at its medieval University thirty thousand students!

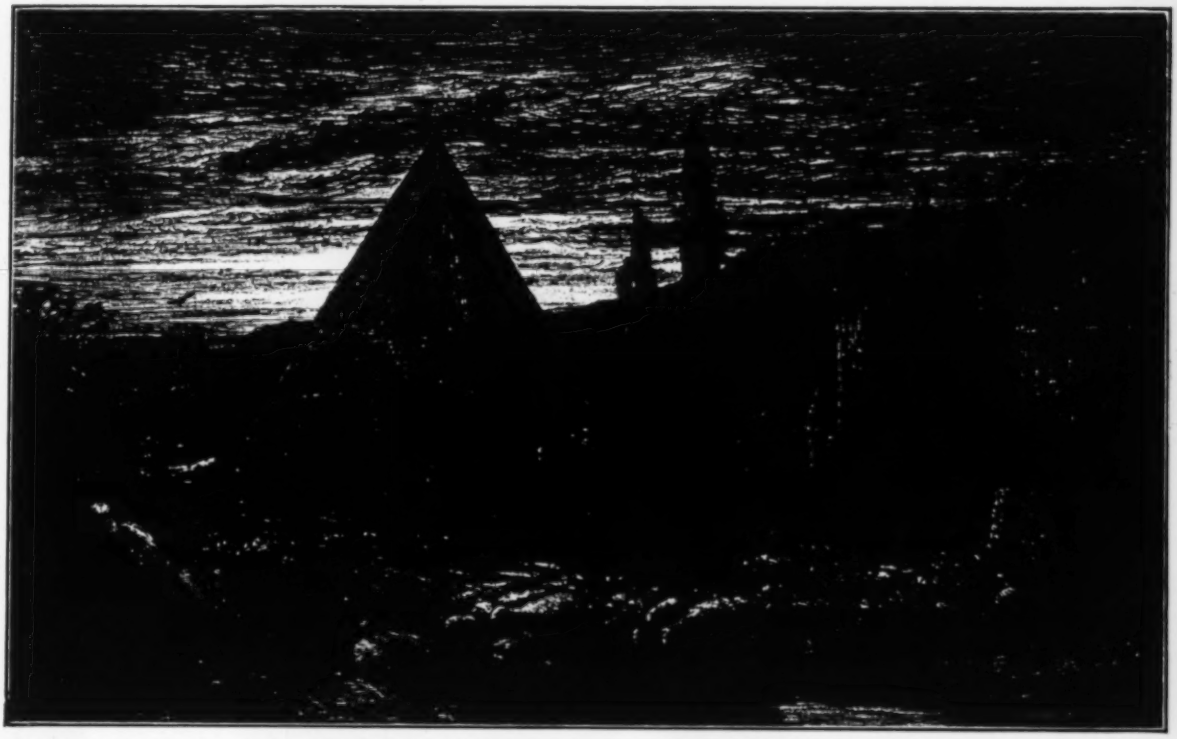
But of all Professor Oman's conclusions that dealing with the effect of the rising on the position of the villeins, and the general economic situation, is the most trenchant and perhaps the most disputable. Thorold Rogers' view that the Revolt extinguished villeinage unquestionably goes too far, and has already been modified. The evidence is both obscure and conflicting, and against the arguments briefly marshalled in Professor Oman's concluding pages must be set the evidence collected by Thorold Rogers himself and other gleaners in the same field. The whole matter, in fact, cannot be argued, as Professor Oman impartially admits, from a survey simply of 1380-1. The inquirer inevitably finds himself carried from one centre of controversy to another; he is obliged to start at least with the crucial year 1349. The nature and results of "the Black Death," and its direct and indirect effects on the economic and social evolution, are intrinsically bound up with the rising of 1381. Some years ago, for example, Professor Hewins, in a public lecture, took occasion to point out that the commonly accepted theories, particularly as regards the objects of the Statute of Labourers and its subsequent operation, were unsatisfactory and would not bear the test of facts. As with the medieval protective legislation the reiteration of claims in statute after statute does not prove that the claims were made good, but very often the exact reverse. And the position which Professor Oman has adopted seems to require that a rebellion, produced by widespread and genuine grievances, which for several days shook the Government to its base, let loose anarchy in at least half a dozen counties, and resulted in the destruction of enormous quantities of manorial rolls and records, containing the legal proofs of villein services and the like, should be held as having had no immediate and direct effect. Does not such an implication unnecessarily strain both the facts and the minds that must judge them?

C. Grant Robertson.

EMPIRES AND EMPERORS.*

It is impossible to read this book without feeling how much more interesting it might have been had Count de Vaya been less discreet and more imaginative. In justice to Count de Vaya, it must be admitted that he was travelling on a diplomatic mission and not in search of adventure, but having elected to write a book he cannot plead privilege, and must be content to be judged by ordinary standards. By birth a member of the Hungarian aristocracy, Count de Vaya studied at various European universities with a view to entering the diplomatic service. Early in life, however, he decided to enter the Church, where he found scope for those diplomatic gifts which the Papacy has always been able to appreciate and to employ to the best advantage. Like many educated Hungarians, pre-eminent among whom

* "Empires and Emperors." By Count Vay de Vaya. 15s. net. (Murray.)



After an etching by kind permission of Mr. H. Buxton Forman.

The Old Protestant Cemetery at Rome.
Showing the Pyramid of Caius Cestus, near which Keats was buried.

The Well Walk, Hampstead.
Keats had lodgings in Well Walk, and composed part of "Endymion" and the "Eve of St. Agnes" in this avenue.

Keats's Grave in the Old Protestant Cemetery at Rome.
Rischgitz Collection.

Monsignor The Count Vay de Vaya and LusKod.

(Reproduced from "Empire and Emperors," by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.)

is Professor Vambery, he became an accomplished linguist, and spent no small portion of his life in visiting Roman Catholic missions in various parts of the world. Many passing references in his work show how extensive his travels have been. At one moment the Siberian plain reminds him of a Scotch moor, at another of a Texas prairie, and the Tombs of the Kings at Mukden he can compare to nothing but the Taj Mahal at Agra. In spite of a suggestion of pomposity about the title of this book, it is written in an unpretentious style, and the numerous casual references to the author's ubiquitous wanderings are not as irritating as a display of omniscience usually is.

The book is a narrative of a journey from St. Petersburg by the Trans-Siberian railway to Dalny, and from there to Peking, Seoul and Tokio. Count de Vaya had audiences of the Czar, the Dowager Empress of China, the Emperor of Korea, and the Mikado, and his position secured for him throughout his journey facilities which are not extended to the ordinary traveller. Nevertheless the journey over a railway still incomplete was not without its adventures, though the writer's matter of fact style serves to conceal the risks which he undoubtedly ran on more than one occasion. But it is of the essence of true travelling that the journey should be undertaken not with the object of reaching any particular place, but for its own sake, simply for the joy of seeing strange peoples and of wandering in strange lands. Of this joy of wandering there is no trace in Count de Vaya's work. He was always travelling with a definite object, about which, doubtless for good reasons, he says very little. The result is a sense of something lacking, an occasional lacuna in the narrative. The journey seems almost purposeless, because we are told nothing of its purpose, and yet this unspoken purpose is dominant throughout, and nothing is left, as the ideal traveller leaves so much, to the whim of the moment.

It is characteristic of the diplomat that there is something singularly detached and impersonal about Count de Vaya's book. In an emotional age, when impressionism bulks so large in the literature of travel, this detachment and freedom from emotion suggests a certain indifference, almost amounting to an incapacity for wonder or delight. Count de Vaya is no Pierre Loti delicately etching his flawless word-pictures and colouring what he describes according to the mood of the moment, till the emotional effect which the object excites seems to transcend and transfigure the object itself. Perhaps Count de Vaya is right, for emotional descriptive writing is either a triumph of art or an intolerable pose. It is the vice of emotionalism in literature, as in all art, that it tends to vitiate the palate and make unemotional work seem pale and colourless by comparison. Yet emotionalism, when it succeeds, at least conveys a vivid impression to the reader; and it is a question whether a vivid impression, even if it is inaccurate in detail or altogether wrong, is not artistically preferable to a mere enumeration of facts which conveys no impression at all. After all, the mere facts can always be found in the impeccable Baedeker, and it must be confessed that there is something quaintly Baedekerian in the way Count de Vaya dwells on the discomforts of a Siberian hotel. Nowadays, when we all buy our favourite encyclopædia on the instalment system, encyclopædic knowledge has ceased to be a modern ideal; and we are more and more coming to value only that knowledge which is not to be found in encyclopædias, even in the tenth editions.

Count de Vaya was fortunate in having an audience of the Dowager Empress of China, the ablest woman in Asia, and possibly in the world, who may yet mould the destiny of the teeming millions of the Far East, and perhaps leave as deep a mark upon the history of the world as Cæsar or Alexander. But here, again, we feel acutely the limitations of his imaginative method. There is much acute and intelligent observation, the criticism of a trained and accurate observer; but the writer has failed here, as in so much of his descriptive writing, to grasp the vital all-important detail which lifts mere reporting to the level of art. Accurate and painstaking, Count de Vaya is unilluminating and uninspired. His narrative, which follows closely the order of his journey, contains much which is interesting and valuable, and which, if published earlier, might have been hailed as prophetic. For the journey was undertaken shortly before the war, and Count de Vaya saw, as indeed any acute observer must have seen, the inherent weakness of the Russian empire in the Far East. But prophecies published after the event lose their force, no matter when they were written. Count de Vaya's work must be judged as literature, and as literature alone, and tested by this criterion it fails. It neither appeals to the imagination by its vividness of impression, nor compels attention by an inexorable marshalling of facts.

TRELAWNY'S RECOLLECTIONS.*

Although Trelawny's romantic autobiography, "The Adventures of a Younger Son," is said to be not entirely forgotten, his fame rests on his "Recollections of the last days of Shelley and Byron," a charming reprint of which has just been issued by Mr. Henry Frowde. Of this book two editions appeared during the author's life-time—the first in 1858, that is, thirty-six years after Shelley's death, and the second much enlarged in 1878, twenty years later, under the title of "Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author." These versions vary so considerably, even where accuracy is vital, that Trelawny's statements—based generally on memory—cannot be accepted unreservedly. Born a year later than Shelley, Trelawny had seen something of the world before he came to Pisa and made the acquaintance of Shelley and Byron. The circle that he joined there was a remarkable one. There were Shelley and Byron—two of the greatest English poets of the day—Mary Shelley, and Williams (who met his fate with Shelley), and his wife Jane. In the first version of the Recollections of Shelley Trelawny records with considerable force and eloquence his impressions of the poet as he appeared during the last six months of his life. His impressions, and even the substance of his conversations with the poet were apparently based on fact, although he may not have reproduced the actual words used in the dialogues. In this record of Shelley's personality, his goodness of heart, his perennial youthfulness, his girlish voice, his very movements, are all described in a manner that helps one to understand the poet, and Trelawny's gifts are shown to their best advantage. Few who have come under the spell of Shelley through these recollections can ever forget them. There is, for instance, that description of Trelawny's first sight of the poet.

"Swiftly gliding in, blushing like a girl, a tall, thin stripling held out both his hands; and although I could hardly believe, as I looked at his flushed, feminine, and artless face, that it could be the Poet, I returned his warm pressure. After the ordinary greetings and courtesies he sat down and listened. I was silent from astonishment: was it possible this mild-looking, beardless boy could be

* "Trelawny's Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron." With an Introduction by Edward Dowden. Price 2s. 6d. (Henry Frowde.)

the veritable monster at war with all the world?—excommunicated by the Fathers of the Church, deprived of his civil rights by the fiat of a grim Lord Chancellor, discarded by every member of his family, and denounced by the rival sages of our literature as the founder of a Satanic school? I could not believe it; it must be a hoax. He was habited like a boy, in a black jacket and trousers, which he seemed to have outgrown, or his tailor, as is the custom, had most shamefully stinted him in his 'sizings.' Mrs. Williams saw my embarrassment, and to relieve me asked Shelley what book he had in hand? His face brightened, and he answered briskly:

"'Calderon's *Magico Prodigioso*, I am translating some passages in it.'"

In another passage Trelawny tells how he went in search for Shelley, and found him at work in the woods:

"The strong light streamed through the opening of the trees. One of the pines, undermined by the water, had fallen into it. Under its lee, and nearly hidden, sat the Poet, gazing on the dark mirror beneath, so lost in his bardish reverie that he did not hear my approach. There the trees were stunted and bent, and their crowns were shorn like friars by the sea breezes, excepting a cluster of three, under which Shelley's traps were lying; these overtopped the rest. To avoid startling the Poet out of his dream, I squatted under the lofty trees, and opened his books. One was a volume of his favourite Greek dramatist, Sophocles—the same that I found in his pocket after his death—and the other was a volume of Shakespeare. I then hailed him, and, turning his head he answered faintly:

"'Hollo, come in.'

"'Is this your study?' I asked.

"'Yes,' he answered, 'and these trees are my books—they tell no lies. You are sitting on the stool of inspiration,' he exclaimed. 'In these three pines the weird sisters are imprisoned, and this,' pointing to the water, 'is their cauldron of black broth. The Pythian priestesses muttered their oracles from below—now they are uttered from above. Listen to the solemn music in the pine-tops—don't you hear the mournful murmurings of the sea? Sometimes they rave and roar, shriek and howl, like a rabble of priests. In a tempest when a ship sinks, they catch the despairing groans of the drowning mariners. Their chorus is the eternal wailing of wretched men.'"

The burning of the bodies of Shelley and Williams, that final act in the awful tragedy of the Gulf of Spezzia, despite some unnecessarily gruesome details, is described by Trelawny with considerable skill and power.

If Trelawny is at his best in treating of Shelley, he is probably at his worst in writing of Byron—it is clear that he did not understand him. As Professor Dowden says in his introduction to Mr. Frowde's reprint, "Byron perceived this tendency to exaggeration in Trelawny, and went so far as to declare that 'even to save his life' he could not tell the truth." He certainly could not tell the truth about Byron, because he did not know what it was—he was baffled; nevertheless he did not spare him as far as his judgment went, and it was almost entirely malevolent, but his estimate is wholly superficial.

Trelawny himself does not show to much advantage in his recollections, a considerable portion of which are devoted to his own affairs—he appears as blustering and self-opinionated, yet with abundant affectation. The book not only contains a great deal of inconsequent matter and many purposeless anecdotes, but reveals some surprising examples of his want of decency. He disgusts one when he confesses to turning back the sheet that covered Byron's dead body to satisfy the curiosity he had had respecting the poet's shrunken foot, curiosity he would never have attempted to satisfy by questioning Byron himself. There is also the astonishing admission to copying an unfinished letter of Byron to his half-sister Augusta, which he found on the poet's desk after his death. Trelawny's bad taste never deserted him; for instance, after Shelley's death, he expressed admiration for Mary Shelley, and desired to marry her, but his advances not being encouraged, later in life, long after her death, he characterised the widow of his beloved friend in terms that were anything but gallant. Towards the end of Trelawny's long life, in the second version of his book, he made a fierce and baseless protest regarding the removal of Shelley's ashes from their resting-place at Rome by the Shelley family.

Notwithstanding its defects, Trelawny's book is well worth reading and possessing. The book has been so long out of print as to render this edition practically a new work to the present generation. The reprint under review is beautifully produced, and a careful reproduction of the first and best version, with the original illustrations; it also contains an interesting introduction by Professor Dowden.

Roger Ingpen.

FOLKLORE FROM THE HIMALAYAS.*

As this collection of stories is not the work of the author's imagination, and does not represent the result of any very strenuous research, there is little that can be said of it in the way of literary criticism, more than that here we have a very charming series of simple fairy-tales, legends, fables, and proverb-illustrations gathered from the villagers of the Simla district, neatly and pleasantly rendered into English.

It must always be a difficulty in a translation of this description to avoid baldness of narrative, and Indian tales must necessarily lose some of their picturesque quality when given through the medium of a Western language. In this instance they are rather too much inclined to smack of the usual European fable and fairy story, and seem to be hampered in style by the memory of Æsop and Grimm—particularly in the use of the time-honoured commencement "There was once, etc.," which tends to monotony, and might easily have been avoided; though there is no doubt that Mrs. Dracott "told the tale as 'twas told to her" with faithful reproduction.

To the student of Folklore the volume may be of value if he discovers in it any local anecdotes with which he is not already familiar; though in all probability the purely hill

* "Simla Village Tales." By Alice Elizabeth Dracott. 6s. (John Murray.)

The Man who went to Seek his Fortune.
While he stood there the old Fakir opened his eyes and saw him.
(Reproduced from "Simla Village Tales," by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.)

tales have already all been told in one form or another in Atkinson's "Himalayan Districts," or by that learned authority on Himalayan Folklore, Pandit Ganga Datt Uprety. On that nebulous being, "The General Reader," the book will perhaps make no more impression than any other typical collection of fairy tales and fables, with the difference that the setting is Indian, and the pages sprinkled with Hindustani words and names; to children, who love wonders for their own sake and not for their literary or scientific value, the book will certainly be a delight, and no better Christmas gift could be selected for small people; but to the privileged few the work will breathe of the primitive wisdom of the hill folk, and give glimpses of various peculiar features of Himalayan rustic life, manners, and customs, and the wild, dreamlike fascination of their legends. Every story is simple and direct, and betrays the author's sympathy with the people and her interest in their daily life. The illustrations are particularly pleasing, and have an accuracy with regard to local detail which will delight the Anglo-Indian reader accustomed to grotesque renderings of Oriental subjects. The authoress tells us in her preface that she has to thank Mr. Hallam Murray for his assistance in this departure.

Perhaps the most curious of the shorter fables is the one entitled "The Origin of Death":—"When God first made the world He took two handsful of ashes and placed them in a corner and hid Himself. These became a man and a woman. God then called the man by name, saying: 'Manoo,' and the man replied, 'Hoo,' instead of 'Ha Jee' (Yes Life) respectfully, as he should have done. For this reason was everlasting life denied him, and where he stood there were his ashes when he died. Now to this day, if a man should scratch himself, a line of white ash of which he was made is seen. If any man addresses another as 'Jee' it is accounted to his good."

Mountain people, whether of the East or of the West, are notoriously imaginative, familiar as they are from their childhood with myths and fancies, and the folk-legends of this particular quarter of India have an atmosphere all their own; many of these Simla village tales are plainly of purely local growth, preserved from any outside influences, while in others we recognise old friends that have acclimatised themselves to their surroundings—to witness "The Snake's Bride," which is only "The Frog Prince" in a different garb. In the same story we have an interesting allusion to the superstition so prevalent all over India that it is unlucky for a wife to call her husband by his real name.

Some of the tales have found their way to the Himalayas from various parts of India; of these "A Legend of Sirdhana" may be noted as an instance of how comparatively modern such a fiction may be. The man Somru, or Simru as he is called here, was in reality one Reinhard, who came from Saltsburg to India about 1750, and deserted from the French man-of-war on board of which he was a common sailor. He assumed the name of Somers, and from this he became Sombre, and finally Somru. After a wild career of crime and adventure he married a dancing girl—the celebrated "Begum Somru," well known to Indian history. The Begum only died as lately as 1837, and it is to be feared that by no possible stretch of imagination could she have been called "good," in spite of her latter-day alms and oblations!

It is natural that marriage should be the theme of most of these stories—for in the Himalayas, as in all other parts of India, every boy and girl must be married; even sons and daughters physically or mentally unfitted for matrimony have to go through the rite with an inanimate object of some description—a tree, or an earthenware pot may represent a husband or wife. We are also given examples of wicked stepmothers, jealous wives, unworthy children, as well as of virtuous maidens, noble princes, and dutiful offspring. Human nature would appear to be much the same in remote villages of the Himalayas as in the heart of modern civilisation. "The dwellings may be scattered," says the Hindustani proverb, "but the ways of the people are alike."

Alice Perkin.

MR. CHESTERTON'S DICKENS.*

Mr. G. K. Chesterton's book on Dickens is a remarkable piece of work. "Strictly speaking," as he would say, it is not a book at all. It is not an organic unity, it is not self-contained, it is not—taken by itself—even coherent. Like most of his other writings, it is—to borrow a figure of his own—simply a length cut from the flowing and mixed substance called Mr. Chesterton. It is a lyrical outcry rather than a criticism. Indeed, we very much doubt whether Mr. Chesterton could ever remove from his eyes those queerly-shaped lenses which prevent him from passing—even as a critic—out of his own elf-land. To a student of Dickens the little monograph by Mr. George Gissing is worth much more than Mr. Chesterton's book, which, with a few omissions and alterations, would serve better as a commentary on the "Napoleon of Notting Hill." We do not suggest for a moment that the "Napoleon of Notting Hill," in turn, might not be illuminative of Dickens, just as it is illuminative of London; or just as belief in the devil may make a livelier emerald twinkle in the grass, a purer sapphire melt into the sea. But we do very definitely assert that the devil is not the grass or the sea, or even Dickens; and that the farmer, sailor or critic who treats his particular subject as if it were in truth that ubiquitous and Protean gentleman will either be locked up in a padded cell or—like Mr. Chesterton—lose all sense of literary values, and write profoundly philosophical essays about chalk and brown boots in the daily papers. His Mr. Pickwick is a sphere-spectacled compound of Puck and the Man in the Moon. His Mrs. Gamp was begotten on a Gorgon by Gargantua. His Mr. Pecksniff washes hypocritical hands in the Milky Way. The nose of his Mr. Stiggins outreddens the Everlasting Bonfire: the whiskers of his old Peggotty are a refuge for the conies and a hiding place for the wild goats. He splashes at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comet's hair in order to expound some of the minor aspects of Dickens; while many of the more important aspects he neglects altogether. His whole book is entirely lacking in all the fine shades and subtle distinctions of true criticism. It is full of reckless critical improvisations and riotous inconsistencies. There are downright mis-statements in it. There is even bad English in it, a sensationally bad English which looks as if it were written on the top of a motor-omnibus by an intoxicated author of Penny Dreadfuls. And, in spite of all this, it is a piece of absolute undeniable genius.

Let us briefly justify our fault-finding before we come to more important matters. Let us be regardless of appearances, and stoop to the meanness of analysing Mr. Chesterton's epigrams. At the beginning of his last chapter he lets off a somewhat erratic volley of sky-rockets. His purpose is apparently to discuss the permanence of Dickens. He begins by saying that "the hardest thing to remember about our time is that it is a time; we all instinctively think of it as the Day of Judgment." We hope we are not splitting a diamond; but the only legitimate object of such a jest—the heightening of some truth—is entirely lost owing to the simple fact that nobody in the whole world does ever think instinctively of our time as that particular Day of Judgment with capital letters upon which Mr. Chesterton relies for his effect. Seriously speaking, that joke is in a very sad predicament—it only seems funny to the man who has not seen it, the man—for instance—who is rapidly skimming a daily paper; and, worst of all, it only serves the purpose of momentarily obscuring the solemn truth that our time persistently avoids any attempt to pass final judgments (with a small j) on any living or modern writer. No journalistic cry is more common than that which, with various allusions to "perspective, nearness, plains and distant mountains," delegates the task to posterity. To cut a long story short, we must say that Mr. Chesterton's Day of Judgment is used for precisely the same purpose as a Yellow Press head-line. We venture to say that quite four-fifths of his jokes in this book are of the same nature. He has a peculiar slang or journalese of his own which shows that he—at any rate—has realised he lives in what he would call a "staggering" time. He is perpetually being "staggered" out of all proportion. His prose is packed with

* "Charles Dickens." By G. K. Chesterton. 6s. net. (Methuen.)

words and phrases like "staggering," "frantic," lunatic, blasphemous, the blasts of bigamy, the shocks of adultery, and hell. It would be characteristic of him to speak of the star-staggering personality of Poll Sweedlepipe; and the earthquake-promoting capers of Mr. Squeers. He does actually say that Forster's Life of Dickens is "as accessible as St. Paul's Cathedral"; quite regardless of the fact that Forster's Life can be multiplied and is a great deal more accessible than the Cathedral to people living in places beyond the cab-radius—like New Zealand. But St. Paul's Cathedral is big and makes an admirable head-line. Failing the Cathedral, a Hippopotamus would have served Mr. Chesterton's purpose equally well. However, he atones for all the lack of "rightness" in his epigrams by the winning pathos and unconscious humour of one of his last remarks. Really, he informs us, "criticism of creation is so very staggering a thing"!

"Few people realise that the general habit of fiction may fade, like the general habit of the ballad has for the time faded," he remarks elsewhere; and that sentence, with its dreadful use of "like," is an instance of his motor-omnibus manner. "Few people realise," he continues, "that reading and writing are only arbitrary, and perhaps temporary sciences, like heraldry. The immortal mind will remain, and by that writers like Dickens will be securely judged." We venture to suggest that it is perfectly easy to realise all kinds of similarly remote contingencies, but wiser to refrain from their multitude—men without eyes, pigs without trotters, all such things are possible—even, alas, a world without Mr. Squeers; and, indeed, if reading and writing are to die, there is little hope of our poor old novels long surviving them. But such conjectures are inept and a blot on Mr. Chesterton's book. Nor does Mr. Chesterton often come very close to the facts when he attempts any direct analysis of Dickens; when he says, for instance, that Pumblechook is an instance of the "dehumanized vitality, fantasy, irresponsibility of creation, which belong in some sense to Dickens." He says that Pumblechook has no kind of fundamental human dignity; that "he is felt rather as one of the idle and evil fairies, who are innocuous and yet malignant, and who live for ever because they never really live at all. *It is nowhere suggested that Pumblechook will some day die.*" The first part of that statement about the fairies may be attributed to the misleading and elvish lenses aforesaid. Nothing more unfairy-like than the Pumblechook of Dickens can possibly be conceived, though we quite realise how natural a denizen of Toadstool-land he seems to Mr. Chesterton. (A very tidy and taut little elf he makes, too!) And, of course, we cannot expect Mr. Chesterton in turn to enter into the world of Dickens; but, in the italicised sentence above we have him on a matter of fact. Dickens does actually suggest, and a very definite satirical point is made of the suggestion, that Pumblechook must one day die. The suggestion is made at the funeral of Mrs. Gargery, where Pumblechook is ridiculed for behaving—as people do every day by some coffin or other—with an air of superiority to death.

The worst of it is that Mr. Chesterton's picture of Dickens, being, as we said, a romantic poem of undeniable genius, has infectious qualities. We notice that the *Morning Post* has begun to speak of the fairy-like "Pickwick Papers." Now, there is really no vulgarity in fairy-land. Fairies have no trials for breach of promise; they have no drunken men to wheel about in barrows; they have no night-capped bedroom scenes. And in "Pickwick" alone, of all the works of Dickens, are these things touched from a vulgar point of view. The wonder is—when one reads of its vulgar inception—that it was not worse. Dickens apparently did all he could to save it. At the same time the *Morning Post* inconsistently takes Mr. Chesterton to task—as we ourselves have done on the preceding page—for his excessive use of words like "sacred." "A sacred sense of humour," it says, "might pass, perhaps, or even the 'sacred bewilderment of a baby'; but why do we hear of 'the sacred house of Hogarth,' such sacred creatures as Lowten and Swiveller, Chichester and Wobbles, the sacredness even of a penny dreadful?" Why? The *Morning Post* had no right to adopt Mr. Chesterton's description of Pickwick as fairy-like, unless it realised that Mr. Chesterton belongs to a great latter-day "Renascence of Wonder," and that he sees Pickwick as a fairy simply because he sees all London as a fairy-land, and Dickens's novels as part of it. Mr. Chesterton not only sees a world in a grain of sand; he sees what he would call "the wild beauty" of the offices of the *Morning Post* against a London sunset. He sees the editor of the *Morning Post* as a fairy; and the proprietor of the *Daily Mail* as the tragic founder of an apoplectic dynasty. He is of course mistaken, but he is one of the profoundest living mystics.

Charles Dickens, aetat 50.

From a painting in the possession of Mrs. Perugini.
(Reproduced from G. K. Chesterton's "Dickens," by the courtesy of Mrs. Perugini and of Messrs. Methuen and Co.)

Mr. Chesterton, then, looks at Dickens entirely through his own peculiar spectacles. He does not waste a single paragraph upon the very important connections between Dickens and writers like Smollett. As one would expect, the name of Maeterlinck occurs four times as often in his index as the name of Dickens's great progenitor; and the name of Mr. Bernard Shaw competes with that of Shakespeare, though it is only fair to add that Falstaff is mentioned more frequently. But, in the meantime, you will look in vain for the Dickens of Rogue Riderhood and the Thames, the Dickens who gave us that wonderful piece of womanhood—Biddy; the Dickens of Bill Sikes and Gretna Green; the Dickens of Mantalini and Mrs. Gamp. Mr. Chesterton speaks from the place where black and white are reconciled, and the peril of his point of view is that he can say anything under the sun with perfect truth and impunity. One is afraid therefore that he may not take the trouble of entering into the minds of those whom he sets out to criticise. We are quite at variance with him, for instance, on the subject of Dickens's great characters. Mr. Chesterton's utterances on this matter are—from a finite and earthly point of view—hopelessly mixed. He defends them as having some mystic and spiritual reality. He defends them also as caricatures; but chiefly he defends them as being "too good to be true." Mr. Pecksniff's "kingdom is not of this world," he declares; and the remark has the peculiar taint of "blasphemy" which one must expect from a writer to whom all things are sacred. The hand of less employment has the finer sense. Yet Mr. Chesterton is an optimist who is quite capable of working up a passionate frenzy of protest against the bare suggestion that anything could possibly be called "too good to be true." And indeed nothing closer to the facts of human life was ever created than this great Dickens world. How otherwise should mere names like Bill Sikes and Stiggins

even now remain so useful as labels among the crowd? Mr. Chesterton, indeed, comes nearest to the truth when he describes Dickens as an ordinary man of extraordinary sensibility. Reminiscence is a more important factor in the work of Dickens than in that of any other writer. The very barges that steal down the sunset-coloured Thames of his novels give us the impression of memories blurred into harmony by the passage of time. We are perpetually being confronted with the so-called originals of his characters. Whether it be true or not that Leigh Hunt is Harold Skimpole, that Landor is Mr. Boythorn, that S. C. Hall is Mr. Pecksniff, and that Dickens's own father was the model for Mr. Micawber, it is very significant that such suggestions are made with a point and persistency unknown in the case of other writers. His own childhood, of course, was a perfect store-house of impressions, and we know what use he made of it. As he went through life there are indications that his extreme sensibility was perpetually being irritated and delighted to such an extent that he was almost bound to reproduce his mental pictures in a kind of exasperated joy of reminiscence. Mr. Chesterton says, for example, that Dickens loved Mr. Pecksniff. The remark is lacking in subtlety, for Dickens undoubtedly hated Mr. Pecksniff. He had met him; he had been irritated as madly as he had been irritated on his American tour; and he reproduced him in the same kind of voluptuous ecstasy wherewith a man bites on a sore tooth. He did not love Pecksniff; but he revelled in portraying him. There is a great deal of this irritation in Dickens. But it never leads him to exaggerate or travesty his characters. There would be no joy in that. The joy consists in re-creating, stroke by stroke, not only their broad features, but also the secret features of their souls, which a less acute observer might miss, and might therefore think were malicious additions. Another—slightly different—effect of this kind of reminiscence is to be noticed in the scene where Joe Gargery breakfasts with Pip and Herbert. The extraordinary play which the good blacksmith made with his hat on that occasion is not to be taken as mere exaggeration. It is one of those impressionistic reminiscences which possess a man like a bad dream (though in this case it was reproduced with a kind of affectionate irritation). "His hat demanded from him a constant attention, and a quickness of eye and hand very like that exacted by wicket-keeping. He made extraordinary play with it, and showed the greatest skill; now rushing at it and catching it neatly as it dropped; now, merely stopping it midway, beating it up, and humouring it in various parts of the room and against a good deal of the pattern of the paper on the wall, before he felt it safe to close with it; finally splashing it into the slop-basin, where I took the liberty of laying hands upon it." Now that kind of amiably exasperated description has nothing to do with mere elvishness. It could indeed hardly be justified artistically if it were not put into the mouth of the young prig Pip, to whom, in his intense desire to be conventional, it is not a whit exaggerated, while at the same time it renders his irritation with exquisite humour and insight. How good, too, is the foregoing touch: "Joe, being invited to sit down, looked all round the room for a suitable spot on which to deposit his hat—*as if it were only on some few very rare substances in nature that it could find a resting place.*" All Mr. Hardy's rustics are contained in the large deliberation of those italicised words; just as all Stevenson's pirates are contained in the convict Magwitch. This is a fact we have not seen noticed before—the enormous influence of Dickens upon Stevenson. The convict Magwitch, with his boat-cloak, his greasy little black Testament, stolen to swear his comrades on, and his awesome threats with regard to the heart and liver of Pip, is undoubtedly the father of that terrible Bill who sat in the Treasure Island tavern and terrified another boy. The very tongue they talk is the same. Is the apologetic old ruffian, for instance, in the latter part of the following quotation, Stevenson or Dickens?—

"Stop!" said I, almost in a frenzy of fear and dislike, "I want to speak to you. I want to know what is to be done. I want to know how you are to be kept out of danger, how long you are going to stay."

"Look 'ee here, boy," said he, laying his hand on my arm in a suddenly altered and subdued manner, "first of all, look 'ee here. I forgot myself half a minute ago. What I said was low; that's what it was; low. Look 'ee here, boy. Look over it. I ain't a-going to be low."

But how far, in this momentary glimpse at the real Dickens, we have travelled from Mr. Chesterton's elvish conceptions. We should travel still further if we had space to touch upon grim chapters like the murder scene in Martin Chuzzlewit, upon the marvellous chorus that is kept up by old Chuffey—that masterpiece of pathos—and upon that wonderful brief outburst, when the wretched daughter of Pecksniff, who has been ridiculed and exposed to the depths of her wretched and conceited little soul, is ill-treated by that Nemesis of her flippancies—her brutal husband Jonas. The sudden pause of the satirist, the sudden outcry of the great heart of Dickens: "Oh, woman, God-beloved in old Jerusalem!" catches one by the throat, as very few things in all our literature do. He cries out like a creature hurt by the memory of it. Mr. Chesterton points out as a weakness of Dickens that he was "easily drawn," and over sensitive to criticism. Let it be remembered that he was easily "drawn" in these other and nobler ways also; and that the more generously and sincerely he felt what he wrote, the more likely he would be to feel the revulsion caused by "a blockhead's insult." He was quick to feel everything, from hate to admiration. He was almost the first to hail the appearance of George Eliot's "Scenes from Clerical Life" in *Blackwood's Magazine;* and the fact is a great testimony to his insight; for the quiet beauty of her earliest work is not of the kind one would expect to awaken his enthusiasm so rapidly. His "quickness" of feeling is a sign of power rather than of weakness. It is the quickness of a disembodied soul. His face sometimes looked, said one of his contemporaries, "as if it were made of steel"; and it was the steel of which Mr. Chesterton's much desired sabres might indeed have been made to sweep Europe with democracy if blockheadism had confronted him as it confronted Gorky. He had the gift of gripping a crowd, and the energy of fifty men. The reforms he did actually accomplish are wonderful enough. But even here Mr. Chesterton misunderstands him; for Mr. Chesterton's optimism is a kind of mental crucifixion.

When he declares that "there are no pleasures like those of the poor," his remark has a pathetic, almost a tragic significance, as well as an optimistic one; and he has a fierce desire to alter the very conditions of those pleasures. But though Dickens occasionally drew exquisite pictures of cosy poverty, and at other times declared that our social system would "either have to reform or be reformed off the face of the earth," we are quite sure he was innocent of the mystical optimism which Mr. Chesterton imputes to him. And this is the head and front of Mr. Chesterton's offending. This is why we can declare his book on Dickens to be almost worthless as literary criticism in the same breath with which we can declare it to be quite admirable as a romantic poem of genius. For Mr. Chesterton very rightly sees, in the work of Dickens, the same "divine cantradiction" which is in the graveyard of "Hamlet," for instance, and in life itself, and in the eternal. But Dickens did not, as it were, look at those contradictions simultaneously, or attempt to harmonise them in any new philosophy of creation, with its implied divine self-limitation, self-sacrifice, suffering and love. He was content with the Gospel of St. John. He had never been forced by this "best of all impossible worlds" to say what, in all reverence and in "a sense most sacred and tremendous," the Twentieth Century must soon grope once more for the old cruciform symbol to say—In the beginning was the Paradox!

Let us end on a note which seems to us to be the most important of all. Mr. Chesterton's book is a sign of the times, a sign of the Renascence which we hold is about to sweep away not only all the little æsthetic cults, but also all possibility of a return to the Spencerian definition of art. Mr. Chesterton declared Mr. Sapsea's epitaph to be an impossible Splendour; but Herbert Spencer has, in grotesque earnest, transcended that wildest "caricature" of Dickens. For our great modern philosopher has inscribed over the tombs of the patchouli poets and the Celtic coteries, the Verlaines and their English disciples, this inspired piece of lapidary work:—

Art is an activity arising even in the animal kingdom, and springing from sexual desire and the propensity to play.

Dickens is one of the few writers whom Tolstoy, in his war upon the modern decadents, could declare wholeheartedly to pass the first test of great art—that it should lead to the union of men with one another and with God. And here, because, as we said, his work is one of absolute genius, Mr. Chesterton finally shows that all his inconsistencies are rooted in an ultimate consistency, that all his critical improvisations are based on the secret and eternal harmonies. These are the final sentences of his very remarkable book:

"The hour of absinthe is over. We shall not be much further troubled with the little artists who found Dickens too sane for their sorrows and too clean for their delights. But we have a long way to travel before we get back to what Dickens meant: and the passage is along a rambling English road, a twisting road such as Mr. Pickwick travelled. But this at least is part of what he meant; that comradeship and serious joy are not interludes in our travel; but that rather our travels are interludes in comradeship and joy, which through God shall endure for ever. The inn does not point to the road; the road points to the inn. And all roads point at last to an ultimate inn, where we shall meet Dickens and all his characters: and when we drink again it shall be from the great flagons in the tavern at the end of the world."

Alfred Noyes.

THE HOUSE OF ISLAM.*

The remarkable thing about Mr. Pickthall's story is his manner of telling it; and in his case, particularly, what we call "manner of telling" includes not only artistic treatment but also knowledge of his subject. Given one who had merely skimmed the East, he might produce a novel, romantic, glowing, eloquent, but he could never write "The House of Islam." To do that is to have crept into intimate acquaintance with conditions of life, and patiently sounded the natures of men removed by the whole scale of human life and human nature from Western society and individuality. A good many people have done these things, but Mr. Pickthall in addition possesses a very special gift of communicating the results. We have seldom come across a narrative style so perfectly harmonious with the story which it unrolls.

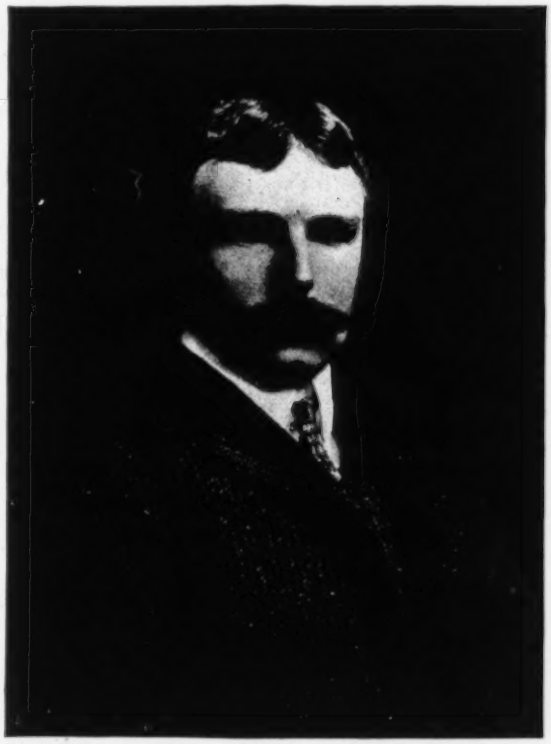


Photo Elliott and Fry. **Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall.**
Author of "The House of Islam."

It follows that it is worse than useless to attempt to retell his story in few or many words of our own. The adventures are those of the Sheykh Shems-ud-Dìn, a native of Damascus, and his brother, Milham Bey, who has been set to keep the peace between the Arabs on the frontiers and a band of Circassians who have been settled among them with privileges and rights. Like a thread through the whole story, affording light and laughter, runs the contrast between these two. The doctor of the religion, tranquil and childlike soul, steers his way, by the goodness that shines forth from him, through the motley of Turk, Bedouin, Frank, Georgian, Nazarene. The adroit and guileful Bey walks over their necks—"he is a devil, that brother of thine," Shems-ud-Dìn is told by Hassan Agha, who is a good deal of a devil himself. Laughter ripples over the surface of grim tragedy, and sometimes bubbles up in a fuller flood, as in the Court of Yûsuf Effendi, the Câdi of Jerusalem. And pervading the story is the piety of Shems-ud-Dìn, who returns at last to his little town, purged of all the vanities, even the love of his daughter, that may come between his soul and the recognition of the mercy of Allah.

One example of Mr. Pickthall's method we should like to give. Here is our introduction, on the way to Jerusalem, to Zeyd, the son of Abbas, not the least living of the many figures in the "House of Islam":

"It was late afternoon when they came forth from among the trees. From a bald crown they surveyed a waste of yellow hills tossed and crumpled in the likeness of a stormy sea. They halted, without dismounting, to inhale the keen air of those highlands. Of a sudden Hassan laughed out and pointed to the valley below them. In the midst of a green-stained dell swelled a brown mound, in shape nearly oval. By one end of the mound moved a camel, by the other a man.

"'He must have been asleep,' laughed Hassan, 'and have let go the rope. And now if he catch it ere the Day of Judgment, it will surprise me.'

"When the man stole round to one side of the hillock, his camel, which till then had been browsing peacefully, lifted his head and stepped round to the other. They could see the head-rope dangling as it ran.

"The man stood still in thought apparently; for soon, as if struck by a new idea, he started to climb the mound. From the top he caught sight of the camel beneath him, placidly chewing. They could hear his yell of triumph as he rushed down upon it. But he pitched headlong, and by the time he reached the level ground his camel was not there.

"The man sat nursing himself.

"'Now he weeps, I assure you,' cried Hassan, exultant.

"'Let us go down and help the poor man,' said Shems-ud-Dìn.

"'No, that we will not! It were a sin! But I am with thee, my dear, to go down and hear his tale. It must be a rare one. Ma sh' Allah!'"

That is fitting and compact narrative, and the whole story is a triumph for Mr. Pickthall's art.

* "The House of Islam." By Marmaduke Pickthall. 6s. (Methuen.)

THE BOOK OF SIMPLE DELIGHTS.*

Mr. Raymond's simple delights include taking a country cottage, picking whortleberries with the village children, talking with some East End boys in a lane, watching a wheatfield, going a-mushrooming, trout-fishing, a harvest thanksgiving, and an old garden. His country, as is well known, is Somersetshire. His medium is the essay, that is to say, a short rambling chapter, to which unity is given, if at all, by the mood in which it is pitched. Mr. Raymond's moods are invariably cheerful. In fact, if we have any fault to find with his work, it is that it has the appearance of being modelled on the literary convention that the country is a happy place, where life is easier to live than in the town. But he has some excuse for this, in the unspoiled and, in the main, old-fashioned beauty of his particular tract of country. What is more, on each successive page, he adds to our confidence in him as one who truly knows the fields and the people who work there; and he is thus far removed from the holiday essayist, with his hasty observations and emotions.

His first chapters describe his finding and taking a cottage in the soft country which is happily placed at the edge of the moorland—

"The door was open still. Not from hospitality but from neglect, for nobody would take the trouble to turn the key. The diamond window-panes had been broken in wantonness. The garden was overrun with weeds; and although the most familiar of the old-world flowers—columbines, sweet-williams, phlox, and many others—were striving to push through a tangle of wreck and a forest of groundsel, there remained many a deep hole to show that choicer roots had been stolen or carried away. There was a peony with buds as firm and green as walnuts on the tree. A thousand bees, it seemed to me, were humming at the red flowers of the japonica against the pointing-end. The creepers on the

* "The Book of Simple Delights." By Walter Raymond. 6s. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

front—clematis, honeysuckle, and rose, overgrown, massed, intertwined—hung forward from the wall, unkempt and dishevelled. A new thrush's nest in the clematis had been torn out. But last year a spotted-flycatcher built amongst the honeysuckle and hatched her brood."

His talk with the landlord, his search for a thatcher, his moving in, his introduction to the village, his first drink at "The Rose in June," and his nailing a horseshoe on the door, are lightly and genially described, with perhaps a too easily idyllic touch (as in the name of the inn) to please everyone, and yet with a firm base upon realities. Once settled in this cottage, he walks often abroad, and the further essays describe the country and the people, with here and there a humorous scene in the village street or the inn.

It is always spring, or summer, or early autumn with Mr. Raymond, and though he touches the moorland, he is happiest, and his style suits best, with the rich and gentle pastoral valleys, that have never any grimness or painful melancholy to his eye. One of his best pieces of description is of a fine summer night in which he walks slowly and far for mushrooms on an upland pasture. He reaches it at dawn, and the following scene contrasts deliciously with the darkness of night:—

"The fine turf, bitten close by sheep and parched brown by weeks of summer drought, was again beginning to take on a hue of tender green and to feel moist and springy underfoot. Delicate pale-blue harebells on their slender stems were sprinkled all over the down, and upon the green leaf below the purple flower of the knapweed a painted-lady butterfly had spread her gorgeous wings to bask in the early warmth of the sun. Close beside the stalk the ivory dome of a fresh-grown mushroom had sprung up during the last hour or two. It was so pink underneath that it surely never could have seen the light and air of yesterday; and the tender outside covering—it can scarcely be described as either skin or rind—stripped off quite easily and came away at a touch. The crisp flesh broke off short under the pressure of the fingers. The flavour seems never so good as when the mushroom is fresh picked and eaten uncooked in the open air, with a skylark singing overhead."

"Autumn in the Garden" is a good, rich, and careless piece of colouring that just lacks the form and motive necessary to make it really first-rate.

His men and women—and his children—are perhaps even more happily done. We have noticed particularly several passages in which old people talk of the old times, and, whether quite truthfully or not, these recollections create a most pleasant picture or atmosphere. Thus his "Reaping" is a graceful mingling of the new, which he sees, and the old, which one of the reapers recalls. One of his old men, by the way, sings that fine song—

"The trees they do grow high, and the leaves they do grow green,"

which Mr. Cecil Sharp has given, with the old air, in his "Folk Songs from Somersetshire." His old gatherer of crab-apples is charming, and we should like to quote entirely her story of how she was given an excursion ticket to London, where she expected to meet a son from whom she had long been separated; but he was not at "London station" to meet her, and she sat all day on the platform, the sweets for her grandchildren melting in her pocket, and her enormous nosegay slowly fading in the heat. He ends characteristically in a light vein:—After being mistaken by the puzzled villagers for a great man who is to buy "The Rose in June," he says good-bye to the village and the fine weather, to spend the winter (so we suspect) in a town.

MR. WELLS'S NEW NOVEL.*

There is a general and futile tendency in these days to label every writer of books and put him away on a particular shelf, where we always expect to find him again when we want him. Certainly, there are some who seem to stultify and limit their scope as if they were desirous of accommodating themselves to such petty classifications, but of these Mr. Wells is not one. From the standpoint of the labellers, indeed, he is not one but three men at least, and they have to make a place for him on at least three of their shelves. There is Mr. Wells the realist, who wrote "Kipps"; there is Mr. Wells the romancist, who charmed us with "The First Men in the Moon"; and there is Mr. Wells the idealist philosopher, to whom we are indebted for "A Modern Utopia." And in the writing of "In the Days of the Comet" all three of him have collaborated, with results that are in every way interesting, but in some ways unsatisfactory.

Unsatisfactory because the three elements of which the story is fashioned are not really fused; they won't or don't mix, and the one seems to be continually nullifying the effect of the other. There are daringly fantastic stories in which Mr. Wells has witched us into believing the unbelievable; but here, though he catches us again and again in the net of his illusions, there are holes in it, and he loses us every time. The very truth and hard vividness of his realistic scenes, and the vigorous flesh and blood humanity of the people who live in them, serve to make his imaginary new earth, and those same people, after they are metamorphosed by the conjuring of the comet, too incredibly unreal. I doubt if any reader will be persuaded that the life-long habits of thought, the natural, inherited instincts, the whole individuality of such an intensely earthy mortal as William Leadford, for instance, could be revolutionised and purified in a few hours by his breathing the miraculously healthful and vivifying atmosphere that envelops the world after it has passed through the comet. As Leadford is altered by this change of air, so is all mankind: there is no more war, no more greed or enmity, no scheming rich or downtrodden poor, but a race of sudden angels inhabiting a transfigured earth, with its "galleries and open spaces, its trees of golden fruit and crystal waters, its music and rejoicing, love and beauty without ceasing flowing through its varied and intricate streets." You have travelled from waking reality through a weird nightmare into this shining dream wherein the men and women of the narrative still look as natural as when you first saw them, but the magic of the atmosphere has abruptly fitted them out with an impossibly new set of emotions and morals. That is what disquiets you.

Leadford is, at the outset, a clerk in a "pot-bank" in the Midlands. He is an admirably drawn type of the average intelligent young man of a few years ago who exasperated himself over social and theological problems, was an enthusiastic disciple of Carlyle, and a convinced Socialist in "the yeasty state of mind" that gives one "a disposition to shout and say 'Yah!' to constituted authority." His mother, hard-working and pathetically patient, with her strait religion, and her fussy little curate-lodger, is realised with exquisite sympathy; the squalid surroundings of Leadford's every-day life are touched in with an artistic cunning in the use of small details that is perfect in its kind. The minute sketch of the homely room in which he and his intimate friend Parload sat so often wrangling in wild and windy argument is a wonderful little etching; and it is through Parload, who first converted Leadford to Socialism, but has now abandoned it and devoted himself to astronomy, that the reader gets his earliest intimations of the comet in the midnight sky, and what is expected of it.

Parload is garrulous about the comet on a night when Leadford is fretfully preoccupied with thoughts of Nettie Stuart, the gardener's pretty daughter: he and she are sweethearts, but have quarrelled. He could not keep his Socialism and his atheism out of his letters, and she is a conventional girl with a girlish impatience of such matters, and a girlish delight in admiration, and the lesser but costlier things of life that he is too poor to offer her. There comes a day when young Verrall, the son of her father's employer, flatters her with attentions; and presently Leadford arrives at the gardener's cottage to learn that she is gone, and has sent a letter home from which it is clear that she has gone with Verrall.

There is, at this time, a strike on amongst the workers in the Midlands; there are startling rumours of war with Germany; and when the comet is so near the earth that it floods the night with a green glare, and the authorities have discontinued street lighting, the war cloud bursts, and there are disastrous battles in the North Sea; but Leadford is so obsessed by the loss of Netta and his yearnings for vengeance that he takes no interest in these phenomenal happenings; they loom vague and unimportant in the background of his consciousness. His state of mind, and how he panders to the blind fury that possesses him by getting a revolver, though in his heart he has no definite intention to use it, are cleverly and subtly indicated. But, circumstances prompting and helping him, he goes on the track

* "In the Days of the Comet." By H. G. Wells. 6s. (Macmillan.)

of the fugitives, and traces them to a seaside place of quaint bungalows. While he is lurking thereabouts after dark, the thunder of a terrific combat betwixt the British and German navies close to the shore brings the tenants of the bungalows to their doors, Verrall and Netta with the rest, and in the uproar and confusion he yields to the madness that flames up within and shoots, but misses her; then, panic-stricken at seeing him, they run, and he races in pursuit.

"For a space I was altogether intent upon the swift monotony of flight and pursuit. The sands were changed to a whirl of green moonshine, the air was thunder. A luminous green haze rolled about us. What did such things matter? We ran. Did I gain or lose? that was the question. They ran through a gap in a broken fence that sprang up abruptly out of nothingness and turned to the right. I noted we were in a road. But this green mist! One seemed to plough through it. They were fading into it, and at that thought I made a spurt that won a dozen feet or more.

"She staggered. He gripped her arm, and dragged her forward. They doubled to the left. We were off the road again and on turf. It felt like turf. I tripped and fell at a ditch that was somehow full of smoke, and was up again, but now they were phantoms half gone into the lurid swirls about me. . . .

"Still I ran.

". . . They were gone! Everything was going, but I kept on running. Once more I stumbled. There was something about my feet that impeded me, tall grass or heather, but I could not see what it was, only this smoke that eddied about my knees. There was a noise and spinning in my brain, a vain resistance to a dark green curtain that was falling, falling, falling, fold upon fold. Everything grew darker and darker.

"I made one last frantic effort, raised my revolver, fired my penultimate shot at a venture, and fell headlong to the ground. And behold! the green curtain was a black one, and the earth and I and all things ceased to be."

When he revives, some three hours later, the earth has passed through the comet, the gaseous vapour has cleared, and he and all the human race have changed their natures. He finds a Cabinet Minister who, overtaken by the comet-vapour and fallen into a ditch, is a new man now, and wakes to wonder at the political follies he committed in his former condition, and sets about making peace with Germany and inaugurating a universal millennium. And by-and-by, when Leadford meets Netta again, his love for her is unchanged, but he no longer desires vengeance, and, the ennobling influence of the better atmosphere having lifted men above petty ideas of social difference, Verrall is ready to marry her. Finally, after Leadford is married, he and his wife meet Verrall and Netta again, and become united with them in some vague fashion as "friends, helpers, personal lovers in a world of lovers."

Mr. Wells is always stimulating and suggestive, and the book is so charmingly and imaginatively written that it is a delight to read for the style of it; and though its jarring incongruities of character and incident are frequently irritating, the story grips you irresistibly in spite of yourself: you cannot believe in it, but you cannot help being interested in it.

A. St. John Adcock.

Photo Elliott and Fry. **R. Hichens.**
Author of "The Call of the Blood."

THE CALL OF THE BLOOD.*

Mr. Hichens's new book leaves with us three distinct impressions. One is a picture of Sicily, another is an exposition of the law of reversion to type. And in the third place, and chiefly, of course, there is his story, for which the other two supply setting and intention.

On Mr. Hichens's canvas, Sicily in spring-time is the land of sunshine; of warm earth, from which the almond blossoms, and at whose word the olive gives its fruit and the vine its generous blood, and the orange its gold. Under cloudless skies, the trees and rocks and mountain shapes stand out with a magical distinctness. Above them, rising calmly in an immense slope, a slope classical in its dignity, Etna sends from its summit, on which the snows still linger, a steady plume of ivory smoke; and far below, the sea spreads forth its waveless, silent wonder to a horizon-line so distant that the eye can scarce distinguish sea from sky. The symbol of this island is the tarantella, "in which all the careless pagan joy of life in the sun seems caught and flung out upon a laughing, dancing world." And the tarantella might be a symbol, an allegory, of the life of the people also, "each of whom seems governed by his own sweet will, possessed by a merry, mad devil, whose promptings he follows with a sort of gracious and charming violence, giving himself up joyously, eagerly, utterly, to his whim." "Gracious and charming violence" is the note of the picture; the passions of the people throw up from their sunny life with a sharp edge, as their figures, when they go about their daily occupations, are "relieved against the face of Nature in the shimmer of the glad gold in this Eden with a mingling of delicacy and significance which has in it something ethereal and mysterious, a hint of fairyland."

In this Sicily is played a drama, among the fortuitous elements of which there is manifested at work the law of which we have spoken. A young Englishman of the upper middle-class had a Sicilian peasant for grandmother: it is her blood in him which calls. Its voice might never have reached the ear of his spirit had he not happened to go to his grandmother's country; and here, of course, is Mr. Hichens's opportunity, so admirably seized, to use his picture of Sicily as at once an illustration and an explanation of the change that is worked in the young Englishman's nature by this blood-call. We are at the novelist's mercy here. He can persuade us into belief in Maurice Delarey's story. It is not possible to dispute his premise when the proof of it is presented to us so vivid and circumstantial. As Mr. Barrie's native of Thrums said to a doubter in the face of another story, "There must have been gamecocks in those days, else how could they have been fechtin'!"

Coming to the story, Delarey is the chief figure in it. There are others, drawn with varying degrees of particularity, from his wife Hermione Lester, and her friend Emile Artois, through the different Sicilian servants and peasants who aid and mirror the transformation in him, to the one or two who flash on the scene only to disappear again, like the little Townley who came sideways into a room, or the Pretore whose black eyes looked as if they had been varnished. But even Hermione and Artois, on whose portraits so much care and subtlety have been bestowed, exist only because they are

* "The Call of the Blood." By Robert Hichens. 6s. (Methuen.)

necessary to explain Maurice Delarey. Artois explains him by the judgment he passes on him. It is he who defines his extraordinary physical beauty and charm—"a Mercury," dimly detects his grandmother in him, and projects the call of her blood, and the fate to which it will summon him. Artois, in fact, though he is indeed made use of to develop the action of the story, plays in it chiefly the part of guide to the reader; and it is a question whether, in the promptings of this character, the author makes a perfectly legitimate use of the art of suggestion. With Hermione it is different. As she is less typical, more individual than Artois, so it is not by calm and detached criticism, but by her life and her love, that she explains Maurice Delarey to us. We have a sense that she has married him, rather than that he has married her, yet we never doubt her womanliness. The author is at pains—Mr. Hichens takes enormous pains in persuasion—to assure us of her age—she is ten years older than Maurice—her harshness of outline, the bluntness of her coarse features, her ugliness almost; and at the same time, wins for us from the first respect and even an affection for a woman with mind and spirit so alive and lofty. Taken by itself, Mr. Hichens's sympathetic treatment of Hermione, who has fallen in love with Delarey because she finds in his physical beauty the complement of that of her own spirit, is the finest thing in the book. In relation to Delarey, when immediately after their marriage they go to Sicily, where she has a cottage—and there, in the few months of spring, the whole story plays—she is a most illuminative portrait; as, for example, in the contrast between the influence of the enchanting island upon her, her passionate and ecstatic and high imaginative love of it, and its effects upon him, and his response to it, when the call of its people in his blood asserts itself. We will not come between the reader and his enjoyment of the book by disclosing the particular steps of Delarey's deterioration, of which the driving force and the inviting circumstances are indicated above. He will find it a rich and glowing, and a moving story.

TRISTRAM AND ISEULT: A DRAMA.*

There are a few stories that to the end of Time will haunt the heart of every poet. Of most themes one poet can exhaust the riches. But Helen,—when shall the sound of her name, the imagination of her beauty call up no more the mystery and wonder that have always surrounded them. A glut of poets seems improbable, but even if every versifier were all he aims at being, each might have his Helen. Agamemnon, Theseus, Francesca—what is it that ensures their immortality? They are the spoil of every dreamer. Each takes them to himself, moulds, transmutes, enriches, according to his purpose and desire. Let him do as he please with them, so long as it be done royally and largely and as it were by right—on Dryden's recipe: if not, then comes the question, Can tame usage eventually dull their brightness? Is there such a thing as the slow poison of earnest mediocrity? It may be so; and yet, better one moribund Helen than fifty—whom shall we say?

Mr. Comyns Carr's "Tristram and Iseult" is far from being moribund. It is now being presented, night by night, on the stage of the Adelphi. That, a little while ago, would have seemed impossible. It almost does still. But of these feats Mr. Phillips was the pioneer; and now "poetic drama" is quite the usual thing. Still, one is not entirely without misgiving. It is indeed a triumph to persuade an audience even so much as to feign interest in modern poetry. The better the poetry, the keener the triumph. But we must remember the profuse gilding of the pill—lighting, painting, costuming, dancing, fiddling. And above all we have to remember the gregariousness of the play-going public. There are many flocks, bleating for a shepherd. It is the elusive shepherd *poetry* must capture.

Here, however, we are not so much concerned with the theatre as with literature. And the custom seems a little to be regretted that produces a play in book-form still bristling with all the technicalities of the stage. Mr. Shaw in his prologues, throughout his works, explains at large; one skips the play to seek the dramatist. "A Heath"; "The Forest of Arden"; "On a Ship at Sea"; is another and earlier method. Somewhere between these delightful extremes is surely a method of printing a play shorn of its stage-craft? At the theatre we have none of it. The scene is *there*, undissected, a fascinating illusion. But here in the book is nothing but a dull, four square analysis. It wafts the sawdust (if that be the prevalent perfume) across page 1. And this before the poetry begins!

In his version of the story of Tristram and Iseult, Mr. Carr has chosen entirely his own way. It differs now from one and now from another of the many renderings, and from Malory's own. Tristram of Lyonesse has killed in open combat Sir Morаunt, the dreaded enemy of Mark, King of Cornwall, and now is setting sail for Ireland to seek Iseult for the healing of his wounds. To end the long feud between the countries he persuades Mark to an embassy of peace: he will sue Gormon of Ireland, and bring Iseult home for bride to the king. His foes swarm like bees. He lands in a hostile country that is burning to avenge Morаunt, and only saves himself from a hundred deaths by his feat of arms against the pagan Sir Palamide, who has overcome the flower of Irish chivalry to win Iseult. Returning loyally with her to Cornwall, drifting on the sea in darkness, hopeless, sick of battling against her beauty and their passion, Tristram drinks with Iseult a love-potion they think to be Death's. The dregs of such a potion *are* Death's; and the play ends.

In this story as told from a dramatic point of view, we think, stand out two rather grave defects. One is the absence of any realisation of Morаunt. Dead though he is, his influence is paramount in the play; the avenging of his death is the haunting desire of half its characters. But we catch no glimpse of him; and so much ado about a shade so intangible seems therefore rather a ruse than a dramatic necessity. And next, since the love of Tristram for Iseult wars incessantly with his duty and loyalty to Mark, since this is the mainspring of the action, it follows that the drinking of the love-potion is simply the end to action. Henceforth through all disaster and delight they are but the playthings of a charm. Honour, effort, passion, remorse have no more weight or meaning. They live in dream. Tristram fades into the mere shadow of a man. Thereafter we do but watch a tragedy that is far less tragic for being inevitable. This vital defect is not so apparent in the actual presentation, perhaps. But it suggests that the author has been concerned with the latter, rather to the detriment of the play itself. What will make a beautiful spectacle, what will act smoothly, catch the usual sentiment, seems the primary aim in poetical drama nowadays. But it hopelessly dulls the humanity and reality of the characters. Fate may seem to be the final arbiter in every drama, Life's or Fantasy's; but in life a *living* man ignores even the semblance, so then must the puppet.

The verse is fairly equable throughout. There are beautiful and vigorous lines:

> "I saw Sir Lamorack with lifted helm,
> Hopeless, yet fearless, ride into the lists."

> "For all the vanished dreams of all my life
> Come trooping to this little nook of time;"

and this in Iseult's arbour in the woods a little before the death of Tristram:

> "Ah! fright me not to-night! Some vagrant beast
> Had stepped across the pathway of the moon—
> It was no more."

Some prose has crept in undetected:

> "He will straightway take upon him Christian vows."

And

> "Welcome, Sir Knight, and thou, my peerless Queen,"

seems a little inadequate to its occasion.

The songs are not in keeping with the play. They have too modern a ring. That on page 23:

> "Night that bears all healing
> For the wounds of day,
> Night so softly stealing
> Bear his soul away.
>
> Where the white moon creeping
> O'er thy silvered lawns—
> There shall find him sleeping
> When a new day dawns,"

as it stands, lacks grammar, punctuation, and meaning. It

* "Tristram and Iseult—A Drama." By J. Comyns Carr. 2s. net. (Duckworth and Co.)

is in fact poetry as generally understood, but it is unworthy of the writer of

> "In that far moonlit land towards whose pale coast
> All sails shall run for haven at the last."

It seems sometimes with the old dramatists as if their verse could not or would not express the fulness of their hearts swiftly, tersely enough. The words pause, gather; and lo! a song: the flower among leaves.

It is a magnificent theme—Tristram and Iseult ever await the Hornblower. We do not think Mr. Carr blew quite splendidly enough. He seems frequently to have reminded himself of his duty to his Public—an actable, presentable, poetical drama. He has been partially successful. But Iseult asks an undivided heart. The wealth of the Indies is her dowry. And at no time are many able, nor even all they (perhaps) willing, to make the surrender

WALTER DE LA MARE.

A NOTABLE NOVEL.*

In literary distinction, as in dramatic force, Miss Cholmondeley's new book reaches a higher level than even that very popular novel, "Red Pottage." It would be easy to compile from it an anthology of beautiful sayings, several of which did not appear in serial form. Some are like the warning, significant music that fills up the intervals of a tragedy, others are the *obiter dicta* of the wittiest and most sympathetic of social critics, others again unveil the loveliness of natural scenes—the prison swamp near Venice with the sea-lavender, the woods of Hampshire in spring and in summer. Miss Cholmondeley is a true poetess, and her slightest landscape picture is drawn with exquisite care. Even in the crisis of the story, as we see from the description of the alder coppice at Barford, with the houses of the baby-pheasants set at intervals along the path, she knows how to heighten effect by the most delicate word-painting. We are told that five years were spent in writing "Prisoners," and it would not have surprised us to learn that ten or even twenty years had been devoted to the attainment of this polished and perfect art. There are no rough or hurried sentences, no awkward, misplaced epithets. The workmanship shows everywhere the ease of infinite effort.

Miss Mary Cholmondeley.
Author of "Prisoners."
From a hitherto unpublished photograph by Lord Battersea.

Some may think that the canvas of "Prisoners" is too crowded, and the author certainly introduces a surprising number of figures who are not essential to the action. As a clerical portrait-painter she is the natural successor of Trollope. We feel the reality of her ecclesiastical personages, and would not willingly spare one of them, from the archbishop downwards, whether they actually come upon the scene or are known to us only from the testimony of others. The bishop's son-in-law, for example, stands out as distinctly as the bishop himself. Aunt Aggie's archdeacon is as vivid as Archdeacon Grantly, yet neither of these two is a first-hand character, or has the slightest connection with the real narrative.

The writer confesses to having skipped at a first reading the chapters occupied by the aunts. Aunt Aggie's love-story, delightful as it is, hardly pretends to be more than padding. Why does Miss Cholmondeley spend so much pains in developing the character of Bessie, who is not, like Magdalen, the heroine of an under-plot? Even Magdalen's gentle romance irritates the reader who has been caught with the sway and excitement of the central theme. Six or seven characters might be lifted out of "Prisoners" without the slightest disturbance to the plot. Miss Cholmondeley, whose constructive skill is so remarkable, must have felt that the troubles of her hero will fill our minds with too painful anxiety, if she did not also provide for our recreation and refreshment. We hurry over some of her chapters at first, as we hurry over the scene between Launcelot Gobbo and his father, the scene with the Porter in "Macbeth," or the brief clown scene in "Othello." Many of us, as Professor Bradley says, would be surprised to hear that there is a clown in "Othello." Such digressions, placed where they are, must inevitably provoke the reader while he remains in suspense, though afterwards he can return and enjoy the lively episode, and even recognise the poet's wisdom in providing the relief of an occasional *entr'acte*.

If there is one circumstance which links together the minor personages of the novel, and welds them into the fabric, it is the bondage in which all are held. Fay's criminal selfishness would be too shocking for belief, if we were not permitted to watch the same fault twining and growing round all the members of her family except Magdalen, holding them in chains which are light as cobwebs and strong as steel. Miss Cholmondeley's prison is not alone the fortress in the swamps—a prison which, as we learn from a note, has no counterpart in real life. The scenes in Michael's cell are wonderfully imagined, and his convict life may be added to that record of nobly-borne suffering with which the poets have made holy the darkness of Venice prisons. But the author shows us also captive-souls in English country-houses, fast tied and bound with the chain of some petty disabling fault. The most firmly chained of all, the man whose sentence is for life and beyond life, is that irreproachable gentleman, Wentworth Maine. In the unravelling of the knots Miss Cholmondeley displays extreme cleverness, keeping her readers in suspense until the closing chapter, and encouraging them to hope for a happy end. Even after Wentworth leaves Lostford Palace, two solutions are possible, and if suggestions on earlier pages have prepared us for the catastrophe, it is not till the end is actually reached that we realise that such a conclusion was inevitable.

On the three principal characters, Michael, Fay and Wentworth, all the force of the author's genius is concentrated. We follow Michael's fortunes with an almost too painful sympathy. His character is well defined at the beginning by Fay's first husband, the Duke of Colle Alto. "Your young cousin is an enthusiast, a dreamer, a sensitive—what your Tennyson calls a Sir Galahad. In Italy we make of such men a priest, a cardinal." In his boundless self-sacrifice, his patience after every hope is frustrated, his slow sinking under the strokes of a cruel destiny, he has the grandeur and simplicity of a Greek tragic hero. As in the case of Desdemona, there is something that hurts us personally, and almost outrages our sense of justice, in the calamities heaped upon so innocent a victim.

Perhaps it is difficult for ordinary readers to believe in the self-immolation of Michael. His wife, we feel, would have been like that Breton girl who, as tradition tells, became the bride of an angel. Miss Cholmondeley probably

* "Prisoners, (Fast Bound in Misery and Iron)." By Mary Cholmondeley, author of "Red Pottage." 6s. (Hutchinson and Co.)

recognised that she had made her hero almost too flawless, and the fight with Wentworth in the "little airless room" of the Palace is a welcome proof that he is not above the temptations of humanity.

In the portraiture of Fay there is no charm for the reader. Except at the moment when, still from selfish motives, she pours out her confession, our sympathies hardly once go out to this spoiled and cowardly woman. Miss Cholmondeley has succeeded only too well in depicting her character. The wife who shrinks from the death-bed of her excellent husband, the temptress who consigns her lover to the slow torture of a life in death, might have won our pardon were it not for the brutality of some of her sayings. She turns in disgust from the sight of Michael's hands, scarred by chains and disfigured by coarse labour endured for her, but worse than that is her remark to her victim, "I would not have kept Wentworth in prison for a day," and again, "It's you I betrayed, Michael; I'm so thankful it was *you* and not him."

Michael's half-brother, Wentworth, makes a favourable impression at the outset. "You could not look at Wentworth without seeing that he was a man who had never even glanced at the ignoble side of life, for whose fastidious, sensitive nature sensual lures had no attraction, a man who could not lie, who could not stoop, whose mind was as clean as his hand." But we soon discover that Wentworth's heart is a nest of mean suspicions. He thinks "not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad pure." Selfishness with him takes the form of an insane, ferocious jealousy. By his priggishness, his censoriousness, his lack of every generous feeling, he has alienated all his friends except the bishop, and the bishop, on page 120, uses an expression in private about Wentworth for which we are grateful to him. When the tragedy is rushing to its climax, Wentworth behaves as miserably as the worst of men could behave, flings off Fay, flings off his brother, and when he sees Lord Lossiemouth at Barford, supposes "he should be told that Fay was making herself ill with crying."

We are allowed to understand that after Michael's death he forgives Fay and marries her. What does Miss Cholmondeley intend us to think of their future? Each is morally guilty of murder, and with ninety-nine out of a hundred human beings the torment of the recollections they share in common would ruin their happiness for ever. Not of this kind, perhaps, is the Nemesis of Fay and Wentworth. The sting of the future must be in their own characters. We have no reason to suppose that either at the last is truly repentant. Wentworth is brooding over his own fancied wrongs when he is summoned to his brother's death-bed. Fay would have crept from the painful scene but for the bishop's express command. Is there any prospect of happiness in such a union as theirs? We miss at the close of this brilliant novel that sense of calm and healing, that uplifting hope for the survivors, which lightens so many of the great tragedies of literature. If the curtain rose again, it would show us, we fear, the petty life of two petty souls. Memories from the past must haunt them, for

> "Neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
> Shall wholly do away, I ween,
> The marks of that which once hath been."

But there are some who find no place for repentance, though they seek it carefully with tears.

JANE T. STODDART.

A NEW FORM FOR NOVELISTS.*

Poe, Gaboriau, and other masters of the sensational story have chiselled a groove from which their followers seem to find it difficult to escape. Mystery stories are planned with the same uniformity, the same lack of originality, as four-roomed red brick maisonnettes. A mystery, a solution, nothing more is needed. In every case the reader's curiosity is made more insistent by his sympathy for some handsome young man who is somehow wrongfully involved in the puzzle. The character of the charming hero is left a blank, so that the reader is able to identify him with himself, and finds it of almost vital importance to follow the clues that will eventually acquit him without a stain on his beautiful soul, beautiful because it is the reader's own, and throw into his arms the entrancing damsel whose single-minded faith has sustained him in his battle with circumstance.

Nearly all murder, robbery or other tales of mystery may be expressed by that formula. Each story is a variant of the essential theme, and depends for its novelty on the substitution of new details for old. It is seldom even a case of putting new wine into old bottles, as with stories of character. It is simply a putting of old wine into old bottles, with new patterns and splashes painted on the outside.

A book that compelled me in spite of myself to spend about half a day in reading it, is a very sufficient proof that the old dull formula is not the only one on which a mystery story may be successfully built. It proves it in the most satisfactory way, because it is a narrative of actual fact. It is an account, impartial, almost unfeeling, of the trial of Eugene Marie Chantrelle for the murder of his wife by poison in the New Year of 1878. The man really lived. The trial really occurred. Everything connected with it has been copied carefully into the book. Imagination has done nothing to strengthen its colours or give the tale a firmer hold upon our interest. The form of the book is directly opposed to the recognised stereotyped form of the murder novel. It violates every canon of ordinary sensational story-telling, and yet, is so powerful in its main interest, and so fascinating in its details, as to shout aloud for a novelist to follow its methods, and produce an imaginative work of similar design.

The first chapter tells us everything that is going to happen in the book. We are shown Chantrelle's early life, his seduction and marriage of the unfortunate girl whom he ultimately killed. Finally his execution is described, at which point the ordinary story-teller would say that for all practical purposes the book was finished. Not a bit of it. The book has scarcely begun.

The real book opens with an account of the trial, covering 180 pages. There was no direct proof against Chantrelle, but an overwhelming amount of circumstantial evidence. The Prosecution brought forward forty-six witnesses, each one adding something to the suspicions that fast grew into conviction. The character of the man, his unhappy relations with his wife, his recent insurance of her life, his penury, his habits, his purchase of opium, the opium stains on her bed linen, her manner of death, these facts, though trivial separately, became powerful together, and made it impossible for the jury to doubt Chantrelle's guilt, although no opium was found in the body, and although no one had seen him administer the drug.

The rest of the book is filled with appendices, accounts of the post mortem examination of the body, a series of letters between Chantrelle, his wife, and other persons, and a most interesting phrenological essay on the poisoner's skull.

Although the end of the story is placed at the beginning, although nothing is written in the way sensational novelists believe it necessary to write in order to produce curiosity and excitement, no book, for a long time, has so detained me against my will. And why? Simply because its form is the best conceivable for the development of a single sensation and the gradual scientific exposition of an extraordinary type of mind. The little tragic biography in the forefront of the book sets this exposition in limelight, and ensures that every detail mentioned by the witnesses shall not only be instantly fitted to its place in the whole, but also seem as momentous as an incident in a detective tale. The prisoner's own statement, and the letters between himself and his wife, are further illustrations of the idiosyncrasies of his nature.

The form of this book is the perfect combination of the novel of sensation with the novel of character. I await with interest the story-teller who has the courage to use it.

ARTHUR RANSOME.

* "Trial of Eugene Marie Chantrelle." Edited by A. Duncan Smith. 5s. net. (Sweet and Maxwell, Ltd.)

AN HISTORIC THEATRE.*

All students of the drama, musical and otherwise, will welcome Mr. Saxe Wyndham's "Annals of Covent Garden Theatre," in which he gives the history of that famous

* "Annals of Covent Garden Theatre, from 1732 to 1897." By Henry Saxe Wyndham. With forty-five Illustrations. Two Vols 21s. net. (Chatto and Windus.)

house from its opening by John Rich in 1732 until 1897; and all will hope that when it closes its doors, as rumour has it will happen within a decade, he will issue a third volume carrying on the records to the end. Mr. Saxe Wyndham makes no claim to originality, and frankly admits his indebtedness to Genest's famous work; but, as he remarks with obvious truth, the story is fascinating enough to bear re-telling. Besides Genest's "History of the Stage" there is an abundance, even a bewildering abundance, of material, and Mr. Saxe Wyndham's difficulty has been to compress it within the compass of his two volumes. "An entire volume might easily be filled with the anecdotes, at once historical and romantic, that surround the history of the site alone," he says. "All this must be passed over, or little could be written upon the magnificent triumphs, great even when compared with those of later days, that had it for their scene during the early years of its existence. In its connection with the immortal Handel alone, there are materials for chapters full of matter the most entrancing to all students of musical history." Mr. Saxe Wyndham may be congratulated upon his marshalling of events past and present, and upon his presentment of the chief features in the careers of the many notable personages associated with the theatre. He has thoughtfully provided a list of the principal events in the history of the house that is valuable for reference, and has reprinted the rare "Theatrical Properties and Scenery at Covent Garden in 1743," compiled originally, it seems probable, in connection with a mortgage; while the index adds greatly to the usefulness of the book. These appendices give value to the compilation, and if we have a fault to find it is only that so painstaking a worker might well have given more information as to the contents of the chapters than is to be found in the bald headings, "Chapter I., 1732-1733;" "Chapter XI., 1808-1811," and so on.

The musical traditions of Covent Garden Theatre are so familiar to most of us, and we are all so inclined to regard it solely as an opera-house, that many will be surprised to learn—or to be reminded—that it has been from time to time the home of the drama, and that there were produced such masterpieces of English drama as Goldsmith's "Good-natured Man" in 1768, and his "She Stoops to Conquer" in 1773, and Sheridan's "Rivals" two years later. This in itself is a record for seven years, for these, with "The School for Scandal," staged at the opposition establishment in Drury Lane in 1777, are the greatest works of the lighter dramatists. Four such works produced in eleven years, and that brief period the palmiest time of the British drama since the days of the Elizabethan writers! In the years that intervened between the death of Johnson and the death of Scott, the only dramatists to be mentioned are Hannah More, Joanna Baillie, Cumberland, Holcroft, Maturin, and the Colmans, the senior of whom, however, wrote the excellent "Clandestine Marriage," the only play of these writers that lives. Though in the last century we had great poets, essayists, and novelists, for generations the drama languished in the hands of Talfourd, Sir Henry Taylor, W. G. Wills, and others not more renowned. Then came Dion Boucicault and Robertson, and things have been better of late, with Gilbert, Jones, Pinero, and Shaw, but since Sheridan only Oscar Wilde has written a piece that can be put on a really high plane. This is, of course, the wonderful "Importance of being Earnest," a literary farce second only to "The Critic."

Mr. Saxe Wyndham goes over the interesting account of the negotiations that culminated in the production of "The Good-natured Man" at Covent Garden. The comedy was finished early in 1767, and then, the author desiring that Garrick should take it for Drury Lane, Sir Joshua Reynolds brought him into personal communication with the great actor-manager. Garrick was always impressed with the value of the manager to the dramatist, and was inclined to treat authors somewhat cavalierly; and Goldsmith was somewhat overcome by a sense of his own importance, and not inclined to make concessions. The play was read and somewhat lukewarmly approved, but the manager made delays that were annoying, and gave vent to very free criticism, that was even more irritating. Then Goldsmith learnt that Covent Garden had come into the hands of George Colman and others, and offered his play to the new management, by which it was accepted. Garrick acquiesced in the withdrawal of the piece, but endeavoured in various ways to prevent its success "in another place." The managers of Covent Garden grew more doubtful as to its chances, the actors, with two exceptions, expressed dissatisfaction with their parts, and the author's despair was kept in bounds only by the encouragement of Johnson. The play was produced on January 29th, 1768, and a new chapter in the history of the English drama was opened.

The success of "The Good-natured Man" was, however, soon to be thrown into the shade by the author's next and greater play, "She Stoops to Conquer." Again Goldsmith found obstacles at every step. Written at Colman's request, when it was completed that manager found many faults, and put off the production so often that Goldsmith lost his temper, and sent the manuscript to Garrick. Persuaded by his friends to undo this rash act as far as possible by asking Garrick to return it, he placed himself in Johnson's hands, and the latter "prevailed on Colman at last, by much solicitation—nay, a kind of force," as he told Reynolds, to bring forward the comedy. History repeated itself: the manager was again reluctant, actors threw up their parts, and the author was so nervous that he walked in the Mall when the curtain was rung up on March 15th, 1773. It is known how he arrived at the theatre when the fifth act was in progress, heard a hiss, and, alarmed, looked to Colman for explanation. "Psha, Doctor!" said the manager, "don't be afraid of a squib, when we have been sitting there two hours on a barrel of gunpowder." In spite of himself, the production of "She Stoops to Conquer" has made Colman famous for all time, for when the curtain fell on the first night Goldsmith stood forth as the greatest English writer of modern comedy.

Goldsmith died in April, 1774, and in January of the next year arose another great dramatic genius, whose claims for the supreme niche clash with poor Goldy's, for on the 17th instant was produced Sheridan's "The Rivals." This when played at Covent Garden was a failure, not so much because of the bad acting of Lee as Sir Lucius, but because as Mr. Saxe Wyndham says, "the public of the day were too fond of sentimental drama to immediately appreciate the breezy style first introduced in 'She Stoops to Conquer.'" Mr. Saxe Wyndham does not tell us how the failure pleased Mrs. Sheridan, whom Sheridan had refused to allow to sing in public after her marriage. She was not desirous to retire, and when "The Rivals" was damned at its first performance, seeing the chances of her return to the platform thereby increased, exulted openly. "I always knew it was impossible for you to make anything of writing plays," she said to her disappointed husband; "so now there is nothing for it but my beginning to sing publicly again, when we shall have as much money as we like."

These are the great dramatic events associated with Covent Garden, and to attempt any record of the minor triumphs would occupy far too much space. "With the stately person of great Garrick at its head, there stretches down the century an illustrious and fascinating procession of all that was beautiful, witty, talented, and memorable in the twin arts of the drama and music," Mr. Saxe Wyndham notes. "With the notable exceptions of Drury Lane, the Haymarket, and His Majesty's, there are few theatres in Europe, and none in England, that can boast of a longer or more unbroken series of noble productions. It is very certain that shrewd John Rich, when he contemplated the building of his new play-house, can have had no inkling of the magnificant heritage he was preparing for his descendants and successors. . . . The early years of the nineteenth century beheld the first and irreparable fire"—["I trust," said Charles Greville, on hearing of the catastrophe, "I trust the paraphernalia of the Beef-Steak Club perished with the rest, for the enmity I bear that society for the dinner they gave me last year"]—"the historical 'O.P.' rides, and last, but not least, the farewells of John Philip Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, and Edmund Kean, and all that their names stand for in the history of the British drama. The short but eventful career of Alfred Bunn found the theatre for once under the same command as its great rival, and saw the engagement of Malibran. During the brilliant Vestris-Matthews management 'London Assurance' was first produced, and the genius of Dion Boucicault was brought to light. Mac-

ready's management of the theatre saw some notable events, chief among them the first visit of Queen Victoria to Covent Garden, and the birth of 'Virginius' and 'The Lady of Lyons.'" This passage, of interest in itself, is a fair specimen of the style of the author, who has no apparent distaste for the split infinitive, and occasionally lacks a sense of proportion that should surely prevent his describing the first visit of the late Queen to Covent Garden as a notable event.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

MORE REMBRANDT.*

This must be considered, as it proclaims itself, a volume for an occasion. It is a "memorial of Rembrandt's tercentenary," designed to float on the uprising tide of interest in the painter and his art caused by the recent anniversary. The main attraction lies, as we should expect, in the pictures, which as reproductions are excellent, though they have been selected on a rather poor plan, and arranged, apparently, without any plan at all. The etchings have been sparingly drawn upon, and there is no special reason that we can discover why those singled out for reproduction should be "The Three Trees," "The Raising of Lazarus," "Dr. Faustus," "The Hundred Guilder Piece," "The Three Crosses," any more than any other half-dozen. How much better, for example, or how much more interesting for the student at any rate, to have given us one of them, "The Three Crosses," say, in various states! All, or all but one or two, of the drawings reproduced here, again, were reproduced in M. Michel's big work on the painter. The one or two referred to, a "Return of the Prodigal," in the Teyler Museum at Haarlem, a study in red chalk in the Louvre of a young woman, and "Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane" and "A Man Watching a Woman with Sleeping Child in her Arms," in the possession of Mr. J. P. Heseltine, are of the highest interest, while so wonderful and beautiful a thing as the "Study of an Elephant" (British Museum) cannot be reproduced too often. But we will be right in concluding that the selection of these drawings has not been made wholly on the grounds of their special fitness for such a volume. The choice of the paintings to be reproduced is much more satisfactory. It includes, of course, "The Anatomy Lesson," "The Night Watch," "The Syndics," "Portrait of Elizabeth Bas," and the Cassel portrait of Saskia, paintings which must appear in any work professing to illustrate Rembrandt's art. We find here also, admirably executed like these others, two portraits which, we consider, show that art at its greatest, the "Ian Six" and the "Fraus Bruyningh," the latter so seldom done justice to in reproductions. For the rest, we miss many works which appear to us to be most significant, the portrait of Rembrandt's brother Adriæn, for example (the one at the Hague; another now in Leyden Exhibition, however, is also in the great manner), or the "Saul and David" at the Hague, "Jacob's Benediction" at Cassel, the fragment of the Dr. Deyman Anatomy at Amsterdam; but this is a matter of personal criticism, and no fault can reasonably be found with a selection which includes, as this does, besides those we have already mentioned, "Christ as the Gardener," "The Presentation in the Temple" (at the Hague), the "Supper at Emmaus" (at the Louvre), the "Blinding of Samson" (at Frankfort), Lord Lansdowne's "Mill," and "Tobit and his Wife" (Berlin). Only, as the value of any such selection lies greatly in the light it throws on Rembrandt's development, the haphazard shuffling of the illustrations here *out* of chronological or any other intelligent order is singularly stupid or else cynically careless. They could not possibly have been arranged worse.

For this no blame attaches to M. Emile Michel. He has merely supplied a commentary to the reproductions. No one was better fitted to do so than he, for no one has done so much to spread wide an interest and knowledge about the astonishing Dutchman. This was recognised in the tercentenary celebrations in July last, when he was made Doctor, *honoris causa*, by the University of Amsterdam, one of the five "Rembrandt Doctors" so honoured for their patient labours in removing the layers of error and prejudice which through two centuries had gathered on the reputation of a great genius. The influence of Dr. Bredins seems to pervade these labours, which have come to a kind of natural close with this three-hundredth anniversary. Dr. Bode has completed his great work, of which the last, the eighth, volume appeared this spring; Dr. Hofstede de Groot, a little earlier finished his task of infinite care and research in arranging into a volume all the documents bearing on Rembrandt's career; and a few weeks ago Dr. Jan Veth published his penetrating and sympathetic and at the same time restrained study, which may be regarded as the most enlightened that we possess so far. Regarding the facts of Rembrandt's history, therefore, we have at this moment reached some sort of determination, thanks to the illuminating work of these "Rembrandt Doctors," and of other students in different countries. The recent celebrations, too, have occasioned an opportunity for estimating the value of works by the master that have come or have been restored to light within the last year or two. Such are the portrait of Saskia, accepted by the experts as genuine (by a very slender margin, we fancy), found recently in Friesland; and the so-called "Triumph of Scipio," a notable discovery, belonging to Mr. Newgass, of London; to mention two only of the score of Rembrandts now on view, with works by other Leyden seventeenth-century painters, in the Lakenhall in that city. For the student, then, a memorial of the tercentenary should have mapped the results of this recent research and learning, and reproduced the most important at least of these tardy discoveries; but the volume before us is designed as a popular memorial, and not for students at all. Dr. Michel in his text has fallen in with this conception of its purpose. He draws upon his own vast store of information about the subject, he writes sympathetically and well; but he does not establish the progress that exactly has been made towards an understanding of Rembrandt, and no doubt most readers will find his commentary all the more easy and agreeable on that account.

An "understanding of Rembrandt" is not, of course, one of the fruits of all this research. That requires the facts, as we call them, but still more an instinct for their significance. Probably no one has ever come nearer it than Fromentin, who had none of the advantages of the new learning, and in one sense must be considered poorly informed about the painter. This is not an ill-natured, but only a chastening reflection, such as may profitably accompany our satisfaction at the results of so much good spade-work. It is also well to remember that anniversary celebrations which end, as they generally begin, with a municipal or patriotic desire to do honour to a great citizen, or perhaps merely with the hope of "having a good time," would not deserve a "memorial." As we have pointed out, the Rembrandt tercentenary has called forth an exhibition of importance and real value. It has done more. It had its point of view, so to say; which was the quite natural and legitimate one of regarding Rembrandt as the culmination of the national genius. The more we know of him, the greater justification do we find for M. Michel's saying here that "no artist ever struck his roots more deeply into his native soil or was so completely the son of his age." This view the tercentenary has urged strongly, and it may be considered therefore as a fresh contribution to the question of the aims and accomplishment of the Dutch school of painting. Yet we shall be surprised if the after-effect of the particular attention to Rembrandt, stimulated by all this recent scholarly and commemorative activity, is not to turn our eyes to an aspect of him altogether different from that of the typical Dutchman. We will not forget where he was rooted—and he had to be rooted just there. Rembrandt, because of the limitation of his powers at the beginning, illustrates more than any other great master the imperative need of mastery of the materials of his art. While the artist is struggling for that, he loses his hard grip on actuality at his peril. Only when he has gained it (if ever he does) the spirit moves free. This sounds like a platitude, but with its statement is frequently forgotten the fact that this conquest of the material and emancipation of the spirit is not an incident in the artist's accomplishment, but is the accomplishment itself. It was so, at any rate, in Rembrandt's case. The actuality he held fast to was the raw Dutch stock. His limitations—the qualities he was wanting in—were just its own. In intention as well as subject his art may have been typical of his country. You cannot, at any rate, studying his works, forget that he was a Dutchman, of seventeenth-century Amsterdam. But it is certain that therein does not lie his appeal, but rather, in contrast with

* "Rembrandt Harmeusz van Riin: A memorial of his Tercentenary—1606-1906." By Emile Michel. With seventy plates. 30s. net. (Heinemann.)

that, in the free-ranging imagination which discovers, sufficiently to suggest it at least, the mysterious significance which is common to men in all times and conditions. This is not a new aspect of Rembrandt, any more than his was an original discovery; but as he reached it by new roads, so it is only through knowledge of them that there comes understanding of whither they lead.

CORYDON: AN ELEGY.*

The marked features of Mr. Fanshawe's Elegy in memory of Matthew Arnold are its sustained dignity and restraint. His verse is never negligent, nor does his thought flag, though both suffer from a frequent obscurity of expression. His poem really needs, therefore, the analysis with which he has prefaced it, and occasionally, we think, the argument is too close to lend itself easily to the additional restrictions of verse. This is made more evident by a style of excessive inversion and a vocabulary that is full of abstractions and overweighted with latinity. The stanza selected is one of much difficulty—of immense difficulty in so long a poem—being of nine lines and only three rhymes; and it is almost inevitable that the rhyming words should seem sometimes rather to have dictated the verse than to be its natural and organic finish. The verse is apt to sink into monotony and to lose its elasticity: and a very evident defect is the frequent repetition of word and phrase. When, however, enthusiasm and emotion carry thought and heart away as in the beautiful stanzas on Athens and Florence; those on Ruskin and Swinburne; and, for instance, in Nos. 55-6, 176, 214-5, and 220 to the end of the volume, the verse is full of poetry, lucidity, colour and sound. We do not, perhaps, really grasp at any time the living personality of Matthew Arnold, though stanza 207 is an admirable analysis of qualities in him, which external influences had only to evoke and clarify. Mr. Fanshawe, like most writers who trouble themselves at all, is despondent for poetry just now. His very enthusiasm for them exaggerates the despair with which he views the indifference of our day to beauty, simplicity and the ideal. Still, here before us lies, we suppose, one of the longest elegies in the language—an elegy full of beauty, and one long pæan of the ideal. Poetry's booth in the market-place never was frequented much for her own sake. Let her sit awhile content to be ignored by all but the devotee. She is already rich in England beyond the dreams of avarice: what matter if awhile her craftsmen languish, her wares allure not? There are still peace and everlasting shadow where she sits, and an everlasting sun above her, manifested in shadow.

Novel Notes.

LUCY OF THE STARS. By Frederick Palmer. 6s. (T. Werner Laurie.)

This story begins with a proposal of marriage, and it would be unfair to the author to say how it ends. But if it is begun it will not be laid down without reluctance. Mr. Palmer, who knows how to be able without being cynical or smart, has put some strangely-marked characters together, in a setting of British society and American politics, and with an unmistakable love-interest near the surface. Geraldine and Lucy make an excellent antithesis. So do the electric, vital Americans and the Earl of Carniston. In fact, the entire tale is interesting, not merely as a study in Transatlantic colour, but from its artistic restraint and unconventional, observant style. All who have crossed the Atlantic, whether, like Lucy, on the *Oceanic* or not, will appreciate, for example, the remark: "How many friendships formed aboard ship have ended by fate's decree rather than by human wish in that dark pier shed which brings one's thoughts from the freedom of the sea to the limitations of daily routine!" This is one note of the unforced tragedy which underlies a bright, well-written story; there is promise as well as achievement in it, and we shall look for more work from the same pen.

* "Corydon: An Elegy." By Reginald Fanshawe. (Henry Frowde.)

THE TRIALS OF COMMANDER McTURK. By C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne. 6s. (John Murray.)

Mr. Hyne continues to work his vein with results that are wonderfully fresh, considering the long list of previous volumes which now stand to his credit. The various sketches of the worthy commander make brisk reading as a rule, although there is some repetition. In publishing them together the author might have done well to cut out half of the references to "radiating authority" and other traits, physical and moral, of the hero, which, like Mr. Carker's white teeth, begin before long to pall upon the reader. Probably, too, Mr. Hyne is unable to write any book without referring to the "crushed marigold smell" of certain rivers. His Scotch is far from being impeccable, and Annapolis is spelt with two "n's," not one—unless President Roosevelt's reforms have mutilated that academy of warfare. But the cheery, vigorous personality of the tall commander, with his susceptible heart and amateur paintings, his wig and his ambition to be reinstated in the American navy, carries one past such minor defects. Many seas and cities appear in these pages, so that there is no lack of variety. And anyone who does not enquire too closely into the probabilities of the adventures will have a good time with the handy, profane commander.

BENITA. By H. Rider Haggard. 6s. (Cassell.)

Mr. Rider Haggard returns once more to South Africa for his romance of "Benita," which tells of weird and thrilling adventures in search of buried treasure. Clifford, an elderly Englishman, who has spent almost all his life in Africa, picks up news of the treasure, and he and his partner, Jacob Meyer, a somewhat sinister German Jew, journey into the remote land of the Makalanga, who would not, however, permit them to dig for it in their fortress of Bambatse "because they said the place was haunted, and if they did so it would bring bad luck to the tribe." There is a legend among the tribe that this treasure, of whose precise location they are unaware, will never be found by any but a woman, who would discover it at the appointed time, "when it pleased the Spirit of Bambatse, under whose guardianship it was." Clifford and his partner are allowed to dig outside the walls of the fortress, and are driven away when they are found making covert attempts to prospect on the forbidden ground. It is with the coming of Benita, Clifford's daughter, that the search enters on a new phase; the Makalanga recognise in her the woman who is destined to find what is hidden. Jacob throws her into a mesmeric trance, and obeying him her spirit goes back through the centuries and learns by whom and where the treasure is buried, and that it is still there, but she will not reveal to him the place where it lies, and though at last, under Benita's guidance, he handles it, he never possesses it. The chequered love story of Benita is woven through all, her love for the man whom she meets again after a long separation. It is an excellent romance, packed with incident, and very ingeniously and picturesquely written.

THE MAN WHO ROSE AGAIN. By Joseph Hocking. 6s. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

A party of men are talking together in a club, and near by them sits Radford Leicester drinking whisky till he is apparently half asleep. The drink habit is Leicester's besetting weakness; he has inherited it from his father. A brilliantly clever man, he is already making something of a sensation in the political world, and the general public regard him as a man with a future, but his friends have doubts. The men in the club discussing him in undertones, supposing him to be in a heavy doze, regret that he is ruining himself and his prospects, and one of them says he has proposed to and been rejected by a Miss Blackstone, a religious girl who has heard of his intemperate habits and that he is an agnostic. Suddenly Leicester pulls his chair forward and makes it evident, to their dismay, that he has overheard all they have been saying. He laughs at their pious concern for him, denies that he ever proposed to Miss Blackstone, and boasts that, if he had, she would have accepted him, because "women don't trouble about morals," all they want in a husband "is a man that shall be talked about." The others indignantly disputing this, he offers to make a bet that he will propose to and marry any woman

they like to name; his arrogance goads them, in spite of themselves, into accepting the wager and naming Miss Olive Castlemaine, a heiress of great beauty and social standing, who works among the poor and teaches a class of ragged children; and the story is of how Leicester set himself to justify his boast, and what came of it. It is a story of poignant human interest, skilfully contrived, and written with remarkable power and earnestness.

THE YOUNG DAYS OF ADMIRAL QUILLIAM. By F. Norreys Connell. 6s. (Wm. Blackwood and Sons.)

The excellent admiral has been rather too much for Mr. Connell at some points and parts of his story. The seaman's sentences are, like the pigtails of the older navy, weirdly long. The opening sentence is equivalent to a healthy paragraph, and the admiral's reminiscences, even at their exciting moments, never get far away from this heroic standard of size. In reproducing the sententious, garrulous manner of an old man narrating his early experiences, Mr. Connell has erred, like the late Mr. Blackmore, by the very desire of being archaic, which easily tends to a slowness of movement fatal to the genuine romance. Despite this defect in method, however, he has produced a capital piece of story-telling. To make his hero one of Nelson's men at Trafalgar was daring. But the result is wonderfully effective, and he has caught something of the spirit and tone of British semi-official circles in the first quarter of last century. The character with whom he has been most successful, perhaps, is Lord Cato Findlater. With his advent, in the second half of the book, the story gains considerably in vitality and depth of interest.

THE FIELD OF GLORY. By Henry Sienkiewicz. 6s. (John Lane.)

The characters in the "Field of Glory" are mainly remarkable for the polysyllabic cacophony of their names and their extreme pugnacity. Possibly the one is the cause of the other, as it must be difficult to be pacific with a name like Boukoyemsky, which is in itself a provocation to its owner and to everyone else. As a specimen of nomenclature we may quote the following dialogue between Lucas Boukoyemsky and Pan Pangovsky:

"Then the astonished Pangovsky asked again:
"'Related to St. Peter? Quo modo?'
"'Through the Pshegonovskys!'
"'Through the Pshegonovskys? And they?'
"'Through the Usviats.'"

Conversation of this kind fully justifies the frequent and pungent expletives in which the various "Pans" indulge. "The Field of Glory" is a story of Poland in the time of the redoubtable John Sobieski, though that warrior is more prominent in the preface than in the story itself. The plot is disjointed and somewhat difficult to follow, and such unity as it possesses comes from the love interest running through it. But the loves of Pan Jatzeck Tachevsky and Panna Anulka Seninska are overshadowed by the bloodthirsty brawling of these unpronounceable warriors. If Sienkiewicz is to be believed, and he appears to have steeped himself in the history of the time, Poland in the seventeenth century must have resembled a prolonged Donnybrook Fair. The story is racy of the soil and not without a certain primitive humour characteristic of the barbarism of the age. There is abundance of incident, though of a monotonous kind, and the style certainly does not lack vigour. But, as the preface points out with undeniable truth, "a full appreciation of the book depends to some extent upon our power of entering into the national spirit which pervades it." At the risk of seeming insular we must confess that this "national spirit" is antipathetic to us. The translation is adequate though rather jerky, but the language and style no doubt presented peculiar difficulties to the translator.

THE COMEDY OF AGE. By Desmond Coke. 6s. (Chapman and Hall.)

"Sympathy's a sort of path between Old Age and Youth." This is the age-old truth, proved again in Mr. Coke's half-humorous, half-pathetic chronicle of a youth's time at Oxford, and of his History Tutor's ponderous attempt to bridge the years between sixty-five and twenty. Radford, the History Tutor, had been content to be a "fossil," had lived on, year after year, in typical old Oxford fashion; till one night there came up, after forty years' absence, Livingston, his one-time undergraduate friend, now a "Society entertainer." And Livingston, regardless of college "form," and etiquette, twitted Radford with his aloofness from the young life about him, with his oldness (not his age), and set him thinking, and finally, fumbling, about the bridging of the gulf. Oxford, the real Oxford from the inside, has never been overwritten. It must be done by an Oxford man, and by one neither too old nor too young; neither a sentimentalist nor a "blood"; neither a Socialist nor a snob. This present "Comedy" is a satisfaction to youth, to age, and to the reader. Radford, by thinking of "Sparta and B.C.," could not join hands with Lane, the "Greek-god person," who happened to be also a very normal undergraduate; youth would not learn wisdom as a lesson; age could not teach it. But in this amusing story, with its underlying seriousness, we see the old game of life played again, and played in that most beautiful of all playgrounds, a University; and, as the History Tutor himself realised, we realise that while we have been watching teacher and pupil foiling each other, Life in the background has taught the lesson. There are wit, sympathy and observation in this entertaining comedy, and wholesome counsel, too.

THE VIPER OF MILAN. By Marjorie Bowen. 6s. (Alston Rivers.)

There could be few subjects more promising for the writer of a romance than the history of Italy in the fourteenth century, and Miss Bowen is to be congratulated not less on account of her choice of materials than of the excellent use she has put them to. The story of Gian Visconti, the Viper of Milan, is thoroughly typical of those dark ages of Italian history when the whole country was a cockpit of faction, an arena where the Seven Deadly Sins danced unrestrained. By poison and parricide and every fiendish artifice of Italian cruelty, Visconti made the whole of Lombardy his own, only to be struck down by the stiletto of his own servant as he gloated over the dead body of his rival's wife. Miss Bowen has told it with great spirit and dramatic skill, and the book grips the attention from start to finish, and is not one easily to be forgotten. Its chief weakness is in its dialogue, which is not only spasmodic to an irritating degree, but is written in a kind of mail-clad, baronial, Gothic jargon, such as never passed from human lips.

THE SPHINX'S LAWYER. By Frank Danby. 6s. (Heinemann.)

Most readers will agree with Mr. "Owen Hall," to whom this novel is dedicated, that its theme is one that were better let alone. The only character in the book that is admittedly drawn from life is Algernon Heseltine, who obviously stands for Oscar Wilde. "Pity was the one unsounded note in the chorus of execration that followed this poor leper to the grave, and beyond it; to awaken pity I have written," says the author; but there is really nothing in the book that can effect this object. It opens after Wilde's death, and we see the "Sphinx," Heseltine's wife, dying slowly of paralysis, and surrounded by her late husband's friends, who are, in the main, either flabby, posturing degenerates, or healthy but equally unsavoury sensualists. Except for two exquisite good women and one wholesome man, a swindling Jewish financier, the people of the story are such as we should bluntly describe as beasts if we found them amongst the poor and uneducated instead of among the rich and the cultured. We are shown the demoralising effect of such society on foolish youths who are craving to make a sensation and be considered out of the common; the "Sphinx" is represented as dimly regretting the blighting influence she and her dead husband have had on lives that have come in contact with theirs; but the book fails of its purpose, because there is nothing in it to awaken pity in any that did not already pity the man who, with his brilliant gifts, his capacity for knowing and loving the highest, was yet cursed with a moral insanity that drove him to wallow among the lowest. It is no kindness to him, whom one cannot but admire, and, in certain respects, even love, to show us the poor dunghill that was his Olympus, the comtemptible creatures whose friendship could satisfy him; and, remembering the sensational letters that have recently raged in the newspapers concerning the delinquencies of a living sculptor of genius, one is surprised to find these pages entertaining

that specious old argument as to the unfairness of expecting men of genius to conform to the moral laws that we enforce upon ordinary men. Frank Danby is one of the ablest of our women novelists; she writes here a story of absorbing interest, with all her accustomed skill and knowledge of humanity, but the characterisation is so true and so unflinching that in many minds it will do its absent but central figure wrong and rouse not pity for him but mere contempt.

OLD MR. LOVELACE. By Christian Tearle. 6s. (Smith, Elder.)

Old Mr. Lovelace is the hero of sundry village stories that are, in some cases, subject to an accusation of overcharge in sentiment, and faintly reminiscent of "Cranford." But the last story, entitled "Miss Juxon's Trustee," is charming. It comes very near to the exquisite art of Mrs. Gaskell, written with something more of reserve than the other tales, and informed by a pleasant kindly humour, as well as by right and humane feeling. It is, indeed, a tale of chivalry wherein the ladye (who is a retired old governess) is rescued from a modern dragon by several doughty knights, all, as she says, "gentlemen in the city." It would be unfair to tell the story, in which the characterisation is so good that it would seem to point to collaboration, unless, as one suspects, it points instead to an author who is very happy in "intuition."

AN AMERICAN DUCHESS. By Arabella Kenealy. 6s. (Chapman and Hall.)

The "young person" who reads everything now-a-days finds some difficulty occasionally, we understand, in arranging the book list for her mother, and may think twice before recommending, to an old-fashioned lady, the life history of a scandalous American duchess who runs away in a motor-car with the "shover." But although the matrimonial entanglement is so complex that it is a little difficult, towards the end, to know who is divorced and who is not; and although the pairs sort themselves out afresh with a really remarkable persistence which argues some dulness of apprehension, considering their experience of life; yet the story is told in a brisk and sprightly fashion that greatly aids the bid of the book for popularity. It is with pleasure that we find ourselves introduced to a wholly impossible person in blue spectacles, whom we presently recognise, in spite of her disguise, as an old friend from "East Lynne" brought "up to date."

"The dark blue glasses lifted to him. For the first time in his experience a ray of light shot out from their benighted depths."

Thus the author; and the novel reader who loves a platitude—and who does not?—will welcome the following observation, and write in the margin, "How true!":—

"We leave children too much to servants. If we don't take sufficient interest in our own children to look after them ourselves, we can scarcely expect servants to suppress their natural instincts for their sakes."

We do not think Marie Corelli could do better than this, though as a rule she underlines her moral observations much more carefully than the present author, who is, indeed, more concerned with her legitimate business of telling her story.

BARDELYS THE MAGNIFICENT. By Rafael Sabatini. 6s. (Nash.)

The typical historical character, on meeting the typical author of historical novels, in the Shades, might conceivably exclaim: "Le bon Dieu preserve us from your pen, sir! What an imagination you have!" For the novelist has created a world of pseudo-historical personages, the like of whom never were, and what is more, has made them credible to a multitude of readers. Here is an example. Monsieur le Marquis de Bardelys, called the Magnificent, libertine, rake, gambler, spendthrift, favourite of Louis XIII., hero and fine fellow at heart, makes a wager with Monsieur le Comte de Chatellerault at a wholly picturesque drinking bout, pledging his castle of Bardelys and estates in Picardy, if he (M. le M. de B.) does not set out into the dangerous province of Languédoc, and within three months make the unapproachably pure heiress, Mademoiselle Roxalanne de Lavédan into Madame la Marquise de Bardelys. How he attempts, loses, and in losing wins, and saves the heroine's father's head to boot, forms the story, which, once swallowed, is in the highest degree exciting.

THE POISON OF TONGUES. By M. E. Carr. 6s. (Smith, Elder.)

Mrs. Charteris, Julian Charteris (the daughter), Viola Glyn, Mrs. Majoribanks, Constance Caryl, Audrey Denning, Jack Pointz, Capt. Richard Thursby, Nicolas de Castro—we know those names, and at once assume that the owners—in fiction, at all events—live in parks and keep butlers. Nicolas de Castro is pretty obviously the villain. Capt. Thursby may well be the ultimate hero. Such indeed is the fact. Yet we do think that for the hardened novel-reader such names tend to destroy the illusion, or at least the sincerity, of a story. The situation which Miss Carr has created is very complex and subtle. Thursby has joined the house-party at Toke Place in order to tell Mrs. Charteris about the heroic last moments in an Indian skirmish of Ralph Charteris, his friend and her now almost sainted son. But he is unaccountably reticent. When he and Julian have fallen in love, De Castro produces a scandal from India about Thursby, a Mrs. Page, diamonds, and a forged cheque. Thursby refuses to clear himself, and goes. He is shielding somebody. Who is it? Ralph? In the behaviour of the people so poignantly concerned, in Julian's impetuous justice and Audrey's wisdom, lie the gist of the story. Miss Carr has depicted the various attitudes with a very considerable care and sureness of touch. Her psychology, without being exhaustive or highly original, is not less interesting than the undeniably good plot; nor does it stand out of the tale in patches. "The Poison of Tongues" is a distinct achievement; limited perhaps, but entirely praiseworthy within its limits.

LADS OF THE FANCY. By George Bartram. 6s. (Duckworth and Co.)

The period is the beginning of last century, when Tom-and-Jerryism was still a living force; and the action—of which there is abundance—takes place chiefly in the "hunting shires" of England. As is to be expected from the title, the tale has a good deal to do with the prize-ring, and there are brisk and realistic descriptions of more than one exciting "mill." The reports of these fights are done with zest, and though Mr. Bartram seemingly has profound knowledge of the sport, he avoids technical expressions and secures his effects with broad and few touches. Two young men figure as heroes: they are not professional pugilists, but they are skilled in the art of using the fists, as were all sporting young men of their day. That there are two heroes might have been no drawback, if the author had sought to differentiate more emphatically between them; as it is, the reader has the utmost difficulty in avoiding confusion between the two. Each youth is romantically in love with a Venus-like creature of the neighbourhood; but the writer, though enthusiastic as to the charms of these ladies, on whose account the heroes have many adventures, introduces them to the reader only very seldom, and they remain nebulous characters. At one point the scene shifts to London, where there is introduced a terrible fellow of a detective, one Grainger, who can flatten pewter lemon-bowls with his fist, take up a heavy chair with his teeth and fling it over his head. He figures much in the development of a story that is noteworthy for its freshness and the verve with which it is told. There are unedifying pictures of life among the "chawbacons" of the Midland villages in the dying days of rotten boroughs and the stage coach.

THE PARSON'S WOOD. By Violet A. Simpson. 6s. (Nash.)

Those who read that charming story, "The Bonnet Conspirators," will only need to be told that "The Parson's Wood" is even better. It shows the same freshness and simplicity of style, while the characterisation is marked by a firmer and more decided touch. Miss Simpson is happy in possessing the prime qualification of the novelist, the gift of story-telling. Few, perhaps, except those who have tried, realise how difficult it is to tell a story properly, without digression or interruption, so that one incident follows naturally upon another. A great point about Miss Simpson's stories is that, like all really good stories, they are easy to remember. If any one questions the importance of this, let him try to tell any story, say "Jack and the Beanstalk," to that most exacting and infallible of critics, a small child. We venture to predict that if he adopts the Mere-

dithian method, or want of method, and begins with Jack half-way up the beanstalk, the error of his ways will be brought home to him with unsparing frankness. "The Parson's Wood" deals with England at the time of the trial of the Bishops, when Popery was becoming a crime in the eyes of the populace. Charles Braythwayte, the Catholic son of the old squire of Braythwayte, is forced to fly from London, and is in hiding in the woods of his father's home. The task of feeding the fugitive and of helping to conceal his presence from the Puritan soldiers in the village devolves upon Joanna Anscombe, between whose family and the Braythwaytes there was an hereditary attachment, such as often marked the relations between yeoman and squire. Young Braythwayte, very naturally, falls in love with Joanna, who has already more than half accepted the attentions of Oliver Barras, an unbending Puritan, but an admirable lover. The rest the reader may be left to discover for himself. The only criticism we have to offer is that Miss Simpson is a little inclined to copy herself. There are a good many incidents in "The Parson's Wood" which recall "The Bonnet Conspirators." It would be a pity if anyone who can write so well as Miss Simpson should fall into this insidious habit.

A YOUNG MAN IN A HURRY, AND OTHER STORIES. By Robert W. Chambers. 6s. (Constable.)

Thackeray told us that Lady Smigsmag's novel was amusing, but lamentably deficient in geological information. If there is no geology in this book it is because the author has no time for foundation work; no doubt he could be as geological as Sir Roderick Murchison, or as Zola, if he chose. But his title affects us breathlessly. It is not railway literature he gives us, but what we might describe as a book of Sentiment for Straphangers, or (without geological boring) Love Stories for the Twopenny Tube. You may open the book at Bond Street, and before you arrive at the Tottenham Court Road you will know all about the hero, who is pleasing, and the heroine, who is rather a snob. In variously arranged circumstances the heroes and heroines meet and mate; and you alight, at the Bank, with your head a little in a whirl, perhaps, but acquainted with an author who is an able craftsman and an entertaining companion.

DEBORAH'S LIFE. By James Blyth. 6s. (Nash.)

When Mr. Blyth created something of a sensation with that powerful but depressing novel, "Juicy Joe," many good people tried to persuade themselves that his gloomy picture of Norfolk village life was over-coloured and not justified by the facts. But no impartial and dispassionate reader could read either that book or "Deborah's Life" without being impressed with Mr. Blyth's absolute sincerity. His picture is so minute and circumstantial that it must carry an irresistible conviction of its essential truthfulness to facts. We may question the truth of Mr. Blyth's generalisations when he speaks of village life without special reference to "Daneshire"; but much as we may wish to do so, it is impossible to doubt the substantial accuracy of Mr. Blyth's picture of his own country. That such a state of things is possible in England in the twentieth century is a matter for profound regret, and one which demands the attention of every serious student of the social life of to-day; but nothing is to be gained by attempting to discredit Mr. Blyth's sincerity or knowledge. Indeed, so terrible is the condition of things which Mr. Blyth describes, that to charge him with untruthfulness or even serious exaggeration would almost amount to libel. No decent man could or would invent such a state of moral degradation as Mr. Blyth declares there exists in many "Daneshire" villages. The story of Deborah's life is the pitiful story of a girl who awakes too late to an understanding of the meaning of womanly purity. It is a poignant tragedy, with the true note of inevitableness. The essential purity of poor Deborah, in spite of her horrible past, is well brought out, and the gradual awakening of the unhappy girl, brought up in ignorance amid the most deplorable surroundings, is sketched with delicacy and masterly restraint. Nothing could be finer than the way in which the girl is brought gradually to a sense of her irreparable loss, for which she herself is in no way to blame. "Deborah's Life" is not in the nature of things a book *virginibus puerisque*, but there is nothing prurient in it, and it is certainly not a book which the serious novel-reader can afford to miss.

CONISTON. By Winston Churchill. 6s. (Macmillan.)

The grim personality of Jethro Bass dominates the whole of "Coniston." Other characters in the book are as cleverly drawn, but they are lesser or more ordinary persons: there are Cynthia Ware, for instance, and the delicate, studious Will Wetherell whom she marries; there is that other Cynthia, their daughter, who inherits the beauty and strength and sweetness that had been her mother's; there are the quaint old pensioner Ephraim Prescott, the celebrated but kindly Miss Lucretia, that mighty political magnate, Jethro's great opponent, Mr. Worthington, and a host of minor lights in the political and social worlds of New England—they are depicted ably and with an intimate knowledge of humanity, but the stronger, more vividly individual Jethro dwarfs them all. Shrewd, uneducated, far-seeing, fearless, Jethro is a very master of men, a rugged, stammering, taciturn, indomitable figure that is more feared than loved, but is never feared nor loved half-heartedly. Cynthia Ware loved him in spite of herself, the silent courage and determination of the man appealed to her irresistibly, and though circumstances took her beyond the range of his influence, she owned at length to her husband, with characteristic truthfulness, that no man had ever inspired her with such a love as she still felt for Jethro; and a day comes when her husband is able to repeat this to Jethro without resentment. For her sake, after she is dead, Jethro befriends Will Wetherell and the little Cynthia, and wins the hearts of both. He is involved in resolute and unscrupulous political intrigues; acquires autocratic powers in his State by shady and sordid methods, amasses an immense but unclean fortune, and feels no scruple of conscience until after the love he had for the dead Cynthia is transferred to her daughter and the girl has grown to love him as wholly as if he had been her own father. The scene in which she questions him, and at the risk of alienating her from him he admits, with his inherent courage and honesty, that he is as bad as his enemies say, is the most exquisitely poignant bit of writing in this finely imagined and fascinatingly written romance.

The Bookman's Table.

FROM CHARING CROSS TO DELHI. By S. Parnell Kerr. 10s. 6d. net. (Unwin.)

Nearly everybody who goes to India seems to write something about it, and still all that has been said is little to all that yet remains to say. When we bring together what we really know of the baffling and inexhaustible East it does not amount to much, and every new light that an intelligent and observant traveller can throw on it is sure of a welcome. We have enough in the way of guide-books certainly; it is not the countries and the cities that we want to hear about, but the people. And happily this large and liberally illustrated volume of Mr. Kerr's is no guide-book in the ordinary sense of the term; it is too desultory and too frivolous in tone for that. He calls it himself "a light and irresponsible chronicle of impressions," and it is that, but it is something more. It describes very brightly and vividly the journey from London to Port Said and thence to Bombay, and so through India, and wherever he goes Mr. Kerr not only pictures what he sees and records what he hears, but he accompanies these descriptions and alternately humorous and informing reports with the shrewd and often illuminating comments and reflections of a man who, seeing much of life and reading much of history, has remembered a good deal of it, and thought about it all for himself. He is never portentous or very profound, but he is often suggestive and always interesting, and the book of travel that one can say this of is by way of being something out of the common. The author's photographs, which illustrate it, add appreciably to its value.

TALES FROM THE TALMUD. By E. R. Montague. 6s. (Blackwood.)

The Jews, like other nations, possessed from the earliest times, in addition to the Mosaic Code, a body of unwritten rules or customs which had gradually hardened into law. Tradition said that this unwritten law was given to Moses with the Ten Commandments and by him taught to Joshua, and so handed down from generation to generation. These

unwritten laws formed the basis of numerous decisions in religious, civil, and criminal cases. In fact they formed a kind of common law constantly amplified by successive judgments, till the law had grown too vast even for the memory of a Rabbi. The first attempt at codification was made by Rabbi Yehudah in 190 A.D., when Hadrian's persecution of the Jews had made codification a necessity. This collection was called the "Mishna," and forms half the Talmud, the other half being the "Gemara" or commentaries on the "Mishna," incorporated in the Talmud about two hundred years later. The "Talmud," like other Oriental codes, is desultory in the extreme. There is no order of time or subject. Questions of the utmost importance are allotted no more space than details of the most trivial nature. The Talmud is a medley of law, demonology, medicine, poetry, ethics, and rules of polite behaviour; in a word, it is an inextricable jumble of the entire learning of the ancient Jewish world. It contains numerous legends, fables, apologues and allegories, some of which are so fanciful and so rich in Oriental colouring as to recall the "Arabian Nights." Mr. Montague's extremely interesting book contains a selection of these legends and fables, roughly classified and interspersed with brief comments, which show him to be a sympathetic and well-read scholar. Like the Talmud itself, Mr. Montague's book is desultory in its arrangement, but as it is intended not as a text-book but for the general reader, this is all to the good. It is a book to dip into rather than to read through, full of quaint and curious matter, and certain to give the name "Talmud" an interest and a meaning which for the casual reader it can never have had before.

THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF THOMAS ELLWOOD. Written by his own hand, with extracts from Joseph Wyeth's Supplement, Appendices and Biographical Notes. Edited by S. Graveson. Historical Introduction by W. H. Summers. Illustrated Edition. 10s. net. (Headley Brothers.)

An illustrated edition of Ellwood's autobiography seems to be out of place. The simple dignity of good paper, print and binding would suit this book above any other. The illustrations, however, in this particular edition are interesting in themselves, although they tend to introduce a modern touch to this reprint of the old Quaker record, which otherwise is well and suitably produced. Mr. S. Graveson has edited the Life with care, and the historical introduction by the late Mr. W. H. Summers is a valuable contribution to the book. In the Introduction are some interesting particulars regarding the trials of the Friends; the following is one of many instances of their sturdy independence: ". . . the famous Declaration of Indulgence, by which Nonconformists were allowed to take out licences for services. There are thousands of applications preserved in the Record Office, but not one is from a Quaker. The Friends would not ask leave of man to worship God." Ellwood's claim to remembrance is said to rest on his acquaintance with Milton and Penn, but his history, surely, is well worth reading on its own account. The book was a favourite of Charles Lamb, who loved the early records of the Quakers. Ellwood wrote in a pleasant and unaffected style—he sometimes reminds one of Bunyan—though occasionally he is somewhat self-conscious. His book, however, reveals sincerity of purpose, and shows that on occasions he could be both brave and high-spirited.

ENGRAVING AND ETCHING: A Handbook for the use of Students and Print Collectors. By Dr. Fr. Lippmann, late keeper of the print room in the Royal Museum, Berlin. Translated by Martin Hardie. With 131 Illustrations. 10s. 6d. net. (H. Grevel and Co.)

Although this book bears on the title-page "third edition," it is obviously published now for the first time in English. The translator appears, however, to have used the third German edition, published after Dr. Lippmann's death, for the present volume. The book is described as a "Handbook of the Royal Museums, Berlin"; by virtue of the author's official position, it may be regarded as a semi-official publication, and it exactly answers to that description. It is a useful manual for the museum student, and it contains a mass of information of a practical kind—starting with a brief and concise description of the various methods of engraving and etching, it further supplies an account of the rise and progress of the art in the various countries where it was practised. The numerous illustrations representative of the chief masters of engraving are all reproduced the actual size of the originals, although in many cases it has only been possible to give a section of the picture. While this method has its value from the technical side, these fragments convey no idea of the complete picture, and indeed are apt to give false impressions. The subject is such a vast one that it was a bold attempt to cover it in a volume of 300 octavo pages. Considering the difficulties of such a task, Dr. Lippmann did exceedingly well. It is, of course, right that the German masters—who originated the art—should receive more notice than those of other countries, but the English reader will observe some omissions, and probably will not agree with all Dr. Lippmann's judgments.

SALMON FISHING. By W. Earl Hodgson. 6s. (A. and C. Black.)

As a writer on angling Mr. Earl Hodgson stands apart. He has a style that is peculiarly his own, and he employs it in examining old theories, suggesting new ones, and in disquisitions which, while never tedious, often take the reader very far away indeed from the piscatorial subject in hand. The disquisitions were a most attractive feature of his previous volume, "Trout Fishing," and they are a most attractive feature of the new volume. From a literary point of view, "Salmon Fishing" is as admirable as "Trout Fishing," but in reading this latest work one is not always thoroughly sure that Mr. Hodgson knows as much about the taking of salmon as he does of the taking of trout. One's suspicions are aroused by his strange confession that till the September of the year before last he did not know what "harling" was. "Many a time," he writes naïvely, "in reading some book on sport I had wondered what 'harling' meant. I knew it was a method of angling much practised on the Tay, and that it was pursued from on board a boat; but I had been unable to visualise it." All this is very curious from a Scot who essays to provide the sporting public with a work on salmon fishing. The opening chapters, which have for title "Spirit of the Chase," "The Elusive Quarry," "Rod, Reel, and Line," "On Rivers," and "On Lakes," are the more readable, but for comprehensive information regarding the salmon rivers and lakes of Great Britain and certain of our Colonies one must read the chapters that follow. In the making of them Mr. Hodgson has much distinguished assistance, lords, dukes, and baronets doing their best to aid him in his quest for truth. Here and there a correspondent's intentions have been better than his information. One finds this, for instance:—

"20, Carlton House Terrace, S.W.
24th October.

Dear W. E. H.,—I don't know enough about the question in Canada. Ask Lord Minto—he knows. I heard, however, in Canada the other day that the fishing has declined in the Maritime Provinces. I don't think there is anyone at Victoria Street who knows . . . . —Yours very truly, Gilbert Parker."

"Salmon Fishing" has for frontispiece an effective coloured reproduction of the oil-painting "Salmon Fishing on the Dee," by Mr. Joseph Farquharson, A.R.A., and there is a wonderful facsimile in colours of a model set of flies.

THE COUNTRY LIFE. By T. W. H. Crosland. (Greening and Co.)

Mr. T. W. H. Crosland is a great revolutionist. He is perhaps the first author who has, quite consciously and deliberately, sat down to record, without pause and without regard to the source of his thoughts or the nature of their results, just whatever occurred to him. The pathological value of such a cause is likely to be rated highly when its turn comes. The ordinary man who goes about his daily work, fumbling with a subject in darkness and confusion, never dreams of print. Mr. Crosland's distinction is that he has put these fumbling thoughts into print. But the world, hating revolutionists in self-defence, prefers to neglect this really valuable side of Mr. Crosland's work and to treat him as a humorist. We find that impossible. His style alone, vulgar, swollen, inaccurate, and utterly without precision, is enough to spoil whatever humorous aim the author may have. Apparently, the origin of these hundred and fifty pages is the by no means negligible thought that the country has been overpraised by townsmen, especially in comparison with the town. It is true that Mr. Chesterton has already dwelt on this; but he has left much unsaid, and he has never

left Battersea. But once Mr. Crosland has coyly expressed his distrust of the country as a refuge for townspeople and has complained of the drains, he has nothing to say, and he says it with tedious verbosity. In fairness to him and his reputation as a funny man, we will quote the supposed extract from an advertisement in an almanac :

"To be young—to keep young, take
Filson's life pills."

Here are a few of his humorous words and phrases :—"At anyrate" (*sic*), "and so on and so forth," "though one says it who didn't ought to," "heaven alone knows what beside." But perhaps the use of Mr. Crosland's name on the title-page of this and similar books is a jest. We, at least, find it difficult to believe that "The Country Life" is by the author of "Red Rose."

WILD LIFE IN EAST ANGLIA. By William A. Dutt. 7s. 6d. (Methuen.)

Mr. W. A. Dutt's new book consists of twenty-one chapters, each complete in itself, on such subjects as Wild Life in Breckland (the heathland about Thetford), the Bearded Tit, the Gulleries, the Edible Frog, Swan-upping, Some Old Methods of Wild-fowling, Crabbe at Aldeburgh, and appendices on local names for flowers and birds. It is illustrated with pictures by Mr. Frank Southgate, which were originally good, and have not been quite spoiled by the three-colour process. Parts of the chapters were contributed to newspapers, etc., and while they reveal an observant and well-read naturalist who writes easily, they are not as a rule marked by any special personality, by discoveries, or by unusual vividness of description. Mr. Dutt knows most of what has already been observed in his part of the country, and he handles it as if he had made it his own. Thus, he gathers together in a few hundred pages and in an easily-read form a great deal of information which is not elsewhere accessible, and he ranks with essayists like Mr. J. E. Harting. But, after all, information pure and simple, and lacking in conclusions and suggestions, is not very valuable, especially when it lays claim, not to something like completeness, but rather to the giving of casual titillation to idle readers. We are not willing to underrate this part of Mr. Dutt's work, and we admit that, if hundreds are capable of it, the number that undertakes similar work is still small. But we lay stress upon it because several of his chapters, like "The Reed Pheasant," "Dunes, Denes, and Mere Marshes," and "An Upland Rover" show the far more unusual qualities of sincere observation and direct description. They are full of evidence that he knows the country and loves it. He has clearly, too, a pen that with encouragement will delight many by its lucid and coloured renderings of actual life, and what higher occupation there is for a pen we do not know. His "Upland Rover," a sketch of a countryman with the wander-thirst, is quite admirable. It gives life to a man who was worth it, and with all our modern liking and affectation of liking for such rare characters, there are not so many of them in literature that we can spare Mr. Dutt's. Going about among the people of unspoilt East Anglia, there is plenty for him to see and hear. He has noted, by the way, a local variation of a well-known folk-song, of which we quote the end :—

"I'll sing the twelve O's.
What means the twelve O's?
Twelve's the twelve Apostles, O!
'Leven's the 'leven Evangelists.
Ten's the Ten Commandments.
Nine's the gamble rangers.
Eight is the bright walkers.
Seven's the seven stars in the sky.
Six is the provokers.
Five's the thimble in the bowl.
Four's the Gospel makers.
Three, three's the rare O.
Two, two's the lily-white boys,
That's clothed all in green O!
And when the one is left alone,
No more can it be seen O!"

We hope that Mr. Dutt will rely more and more upon his own eyes, which, even if they were not so good as they are, would be of more use to him than any other man's.

CYRUS THE GREAT KING. An Historical Romance. By Sir Edward Durand, Bart. 10s. 6d. net. (Appleton.)

The trained Oriental scholar may be able to follow the mazes of this substantial volume, but to the ordinary reader it must remain more or less of a mystery play. This poem of thirteen cantos is in quasi-dramatic form and occupies 392 goodly pages of fair print. In so wide a compass variety is almost a necessity, and Sir Edward has considerately tried nearly every form of verse. A wild Swinburnian dithyrambic measure has its temptations, also its pitfalls. The author has escaped neither. Into the mouth of the prophet Daniel, he puts these lines among countless others addressed to the Daughter of Judah :—

"Be the sound of thy voice in his ears as the song of the water
That ripples and rings when the fountains of Jordan o'erflow,
Thy breasts as the hillocks of Hermon; let Israel's daughter
Be straight as the palm upon Carmel, and pure as the snow."

There is a prose argument, which alas! is something of a deterrent. Amid a medley of strange names, some of which appear (for the sake of the metre) in three forms, the poem sets forth how Cyrus was God's chosen instrument to restore the People of the Captivity, to rebuild the Temple, and so to prepare the way for the coming of the Christ. The birth and early adventures of Cyrus are described. At first he takes to the road, and this leads the great King into a strange interview with Daniel, now out of Court favour and an exile. The prophet goes out to curse Cyrus, but remains to bless him. "He prophesies and warns Cyrus," who then begins his conquests. Lydia and Babylon fall before him; thus he fulfils his mission, and the world is at peace. But he blunders into war on the Saca tribes, descendants of the chosen people. Their Queen defeats and slays him, he passes to his sleep on the mountains of Déna, the shade of Daniel appearing to him at the last. In a final scene the great king is shown sleeping with his warriors until he shall have power to wake again, restore Persia, and give law to the world in the latter days.

Notes on New Books.

MR. T. WERNER LAURIE.

The third volume in Mr. Bumpus's series on **The Cathedrals of England and Wales** (6s. net.) suffers nothing from the fact that it is the final one, and might be expected to contain something of a sweeping up of the less interesting buildings to make the work complete. In this group are such architectural masterpieces as Gloucester and Lichfield, such a unique foundation as Oxford, such buildings of varied interests as Carlisle, St. Asaph, Rochester and Bangor, and a list of encouraging beauties, each with its own claim to admiration, which have been raised by living hands in our own time. As an antiquary, a connoisseur, a teller of picturesque fact and anecdote Mr. Bumpus captures and holds the attention of all. His book is serious, instructive, explanatory, and at the same time vivid and engrossing. His words and the thirty-two illustrations he has included will kindle a love of architecture and a pride in, and veneration for, our cathedrals in many a reader who cared but little for these things before. This is a book to recommend to those about to make a "pilgrimage" to England's cities.

MR. SYDNEY C. MAYLE.

In the slim, bright volume entitled **Sketches in Scarlet**, by Mrs. Robertson, Glasgow (1s. 6d. net), and dedicated to the Suffolk Regiment, we feel that we have soldier-stories written from the life—written with a pen dipped in sympathy, and that sympathy the sympathy which comes from knowledge and experience. The sketches take us, so to speak, from "Reveille" to "Lights Out," the first and the last bugle calls; and to all her readers, especially to those who have known the stirring insistence of the "Reveille," and the unspeakably haunting, thrilling and pathetic echo of "Lights Out," the notes struck by the writer in the first and last of these little stories will seem admirably appropriate. In the one we see the young soldier-boy facing his first bullets; in the other we see the Colonel, still young in feeling, and not very old in years, forced by the age-clause to retire on a pension. We see him, with all his vigour, his love of his profession, and his capability, silently taking farewell of his sword. "He drew the sword nearer, and began to grease the blade. Thought was intolerable, but there was still work of a kind to do; woman's work, The greasing of a piece of rusty steel—the making up of a tidy parcel, such as one carried from the Army and Navy Stores. He slid the blade into the scabbard, and something hot and burning, to which his keen eyes were quite unused, fell silently as he worked, and was driven home with the blade." Everyday affairs in a soldier's life, entirely understood and simply told, these are the things that make up the little book. Humour and pathos, the bare facts and the underlying emotions of joy and pain, the common lot of man which is often so uncommon to each individual man—the writer has grasped all this, and her words ring true.

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